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MODERN GREECE.

MODERN GREECE:

TWO LECTURES

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE PHILOSOPHICAL INSTITUTION OF EDINBURGH,

WITH PAPERS ON 'THE PROGRESS OF GREECE' AND 'BYRON IN GREECE.'

BY

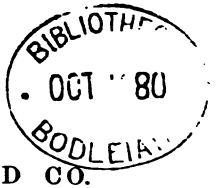
R. C. JEBB, LL.D. EDIN.,

PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

οὐπιῤῥέων γὰρ τιμιώτερος χρόνος
ἔσται πολίταις τοῖσδε.

AESCHYLUS.

The tide of years to come shall bring more praise
To this thy people.



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PREFATORY NOTE.

LAST winter I had the honour of delivering at the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh two lectures on Modern Greece, which are here published, with a few slight alterations, chiefly verbal.

The paper on 'The Progress of Greece' appeared in *Macmillan's Magazine* for March, 1879. It is reprinted here, in a revised form, as illustrating those parts of the second lecture which touch on the social and political condition of Greece at the present day. The paper on 'Byron in Greece' is supplementary to the first lecture, which sketches the history of the Greek nationality. In such a sketch the Greek War of Independence could be treated only in its most general aspect. No episode of that war is more interesting to Byron's countrymen than that with which his name is connected; and it is also one which places us midway between the opening and closing chapters of a memorable struggle.

It is my hope that this little book may be acceptable to those who desire to have the elementary facts of the subject in a concise form, and that it may help in sending readers to sources of information more important than itself. Hertzberg's *Geschichte Griechenlands unter der Römer*, his *Geschichte Griechenlands seit dem Absterben des antiken Lebens bis zur Gegenwart*, and Carl Hopf's

Geschichte Griechenlands, are standard works well known to students. Some valuable matter, especially with regard to the early Slavonic settlements, may be found in C. J. Jireček's *Geschichte der Bulgaren*. Finlay's History of Greece, from B.C. 146 to A.D. 1864, has lately been issued from the Clarendon Press in a new edition of seven volumes, enriched by the notes of the editor, Mr. H. F. Tozer, of Exeter College, whose learning has brought the latest light to bear on many points in which the statements of the text required modification.

For the statistics of contemporary Greece, political, social, and industrial, the work of M. Moraïtinis, *La Grèce telle qu'elle est*, has now an English companion in the *New Greece* of Mr. Lewis Sergeant.

Foreign observers of Greek affairs are, broadly speaking, of two classes: those who think that Greece has a future, and those who further think that she may be allowed to have a present. Where the latter opinion is entertained with most conviction, there will be least disposition to suppose that sincere good-will to the Greek cause demands the concealment of defects, or the undue depreciation of other nationalities.

May, 1880.

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MODERN GREECE.

I.

THE privilege of addressing an audience at the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh on such a subject as Modern Greece imposes an obligation which must be obeyed at the outset—that of defining the ground which it is proposed to traverse. My lecture this evening will attempt to trace in outline the story of the Greek nation from the time of Alexander the Great to our own. In a second lecture on Friday next I shall endeavour to give some of the impressions derived from a recent visit to Greece.

The central fact of all Greek history, from the earliest age down to the present day, is the unbroken life of the Greek nationality. Here, after all, is the great contrast between the destiny of Italy and of Greece. The principles of Roman law have survived the Roman type of character and mind. Greece, the

The Greek Nationality.

first seat of European politics, has left us no direct political inheritance, but has perpetuated the intellectual and moral stamp of Hellenic society in a national character of marked distinction.

Its two phases.

The national unity of the ancient Hellenes rested not merely on common language and common institutions, but also on common blood. All Hellenes regarded themselves as scions of one stock. A new kind of Hellenic nationality sprang from the Asiatic conquests of Alexander the Great. Alexander founded cities which were Greek in civilization, but of which the population was partly Greek, partly Macedonian, partly Asiatic. Henceforth there are two types of Greek—the Greek of Europe and the Greek of Asia. The Greek of Europe—dwelling chiefly in Greece Proper and the islands—still claimed pure Hellenic blood, and retained in some measure the nobler qualities of the ancient race. The Greek of Asia was usually of mixed blood, and in him the quick Greek intelligence passed over into a more decidedly Asiatic type of versatility or cunning.

For 150 years after Alexander the dying embers of freedom in European Greece flickered with a fitful light: then the Romans, having first conquered Macedon, conquered Greece also.

From 146 B.C. to 1821.

After that, the story of Greek subjection has three great chapters—Roman, Byzantine, Turkish. The Roman chapter begins in 146 B.C. and ends in 716 A.D. The Byzantine chapter begins in 716 A.D. and ends in 1453 A.D. The Turkish chapter begins in 1453 and extends down to 1821.

I. Roman period: 146 B.C.—716 A.D.

The Roman conquest of Greece was a welcome event to the mass of the European Greeks. The popular sentiment at the time was expressed by a parody of the saying attributed to Themistocles in exile, to the effect that his ruin had made his fortune. The general feeling was, 'We can hardly be worse off, and perhaps Rome may give us rest.' And for some time the Greeks had no cause to complain. The Roman way of ruling the world was too practical to be mechanical. It never affected a pedantic uniformity in the government of the provinces. In Greece the Romans found a political civilization ready-made, and in good order. Each city had a complete machinery for the management of its own affairs, and this machinery would work equally well whether the city was independent or not. The Romans, therefore, let it alone as much as they could. Rome said to Greek cities, 'Pay your taxes, but manage your own concerns in your own way.' Under Rome the Greek

cities of Greece Proper had municipal self-government for nearly five centuries, till Constantine's time.

Population. Yet the whole period of Roman domination in Greece was a period of decline. In 300 B.C. the population of Greece Proper and the islands may have been about three and a half millons, and the total Greek race, including the Asiatic Greeks, about seven millions. At the end of the first century of our era, 400 years later, the population of Greece Proper and the islands was probably under two millions, and the total of the Greek race perhaps did

Taxes. not exceed five millions. The Roman taxes were not excessive in amount, but the system of letting and sub-letting them vested a frightful tyranny in the

Public works. tax-farmers. Rome spent little or nothing out of the taxes on keeping up public works in Greece—roads and bridges, water-courses and harbours; the disarmed provincials were incessantly harried by pirates; and in Greece, as in Italy, the accumulation in a few hands of vast estates, cultivated by slaves, was gradually crushing out the middle-class. The early Emperors were usually well-disposed to Greece—it was the tone of educated society to be so—and the Emperor's

Land. jealousy of the Senate told in the same direction. But the first real benefactor of Greece, in Roman days, was

Hadrian. Hadrian's sympathy was not shown merely in the temples and buildings with which he adorned Athens. He brought to that city the water of Cephissia, and he brought the water of Lake Stymphalus to Corinth. He did a better thing yet—he placed Greek life on the firm basis of Roman law, by codifying the local usages of the Greek cities on Roman principles, without abolishing municipal institutions; and he gave the rights of Roman citizenship to the Greeks nearly a century before Caracalla gave them to all free subjects of the empire. Hadrian.

Everyone knows, from Juvenal or Johnson, the character of the Greek at Rome—the versatile adventurer who was equally ready to cast a horoscope or to compound a medicine, to square the circle or to drill the ballet, to pose as a professor or an acrobat: a being whose rank traversed the whole scale which separates an Italian organ-grinder from the last new tenor, but who was always so far in the same condition, that Rome refused to take him seriously. This was the needy Greek of Asia or Alexandria who came to push his way at Rome. But there was another type of Greek which was not much seen at Rome,—the Greek of Europe, who stayed in Greece Proper. When the Romans conquered Greece, they found that the bulk of The Greek at Rome. The Greek in Greece.

the population were of a class hardly known in Italy. In Cicero's time it was very rare for a comparatively poor man in Italy to have any land of his own. But in Greece the mass of the free men were still farming their own land, just as in the old days. We have not far to seek for a specimen of the Greek farmer or small landowner who lived on his own land in the old country among the old associations. There could not be a better specimen than Plutarch at the end of the first century. Plutarch had paid a few visits to Rome as a tourist from the provinces, but he spent the latter years of his quiet life in Greece, near his native place, Chæroneia—the scene of the battle in which Philip dealt the death-blow to Greek liberty. In his 'Table-talk' Plutarch gives us pleasant glimpses of the society of the time. Here is his picture of life at a watering-place, a Greek Brighton, in Eubœa:—

Plutarch.

'It is a place fitted by nature for sundry honest pleasures, beautified with many fair houses and lodgings, in such sort as it is reputed the public hostelry of all Greece. This town flourishes chiefly in the middle of spring; for many resort thither at that time, and meet in each others' houses at tables spread with all good things, and, being at leisure, hold large converse touching letters.'

Greece was so thinly peopled then, Plutarch says, that the whole country could not have furnished more than 3,000 heavy-armed soldiers—the number furnished of old by one second-rate town in the Peloponnesus. Corn-fields had become lonely sheep-walks, where you might walk all day long and scarcely meet a soul. For educated men it was a time of quiet looking-back on the great past; and that past was around them everywhere. Close to Plutarch's home stood the great stone lion commemorating those who died for Greek freedom at Chæroneia. One still sees its fragments there by the roadside. Plutarch had seen Phocion's house at Athens, and the underground chamber of Demosthenes, and the offerings dedicated by Nicias, and at Sparta the spear of Agesilaos: the old forms and names survived; the great games were still held at the Isthmus and at Delphi, at Nemea and at Olympia; the Amphictyonic Council still met; the ancient court still sat on the hill of Mars; the Spartan Senate was still the Gerousia; and Athens was still a home of letters and art, and of much else that Roman swords could not destroy, nor Roman money buy. Lucian, three generations after Plutarch, can still contrast the tranquil elegance of Athenian life with the extravagant luxury of Rome; and if Juvenal called

Greek history mendacious for saying that Xerxes dug that canal through Mount Athos which can be traced at this day, Lucian is ready with the retort that a Roman told the truth only once in his life, and that was when he made his will.

Goths at Athens (262 A.D.)

Greece, then, had still a worthy home-life of its own, both in country and in town; but some powerful tonic was needed to lift and brace that life. Such a tonic came in the middle of the third century. The Goths, after defeating the Roman legions, stormed Athens. For 300 years the Greeks had had no chance of showing that they could fight: but they showed it now: they drove the Goths out of Greece, inflicting on them their first grave reverse. Here was a proof that the warlike spirit lived: a proof the more striking since this enemy was the same before whom the Western Empire afterwards went down: and this was at a time when many young Romans, we are told, were cutting off their thumbs to avoid military service. The Greek success was largely due to a regenerating influence which had now taken full hold of the Greek character.

Christianity and the Greeks.

Christianity had long been working its way upwards from the lower strata of Greek society. 'We will hear thee again of this matter,' the Atheni-

ans had said to St. Paul; and curiosity had ended in conversion. The Greeks were a people peculiarly sensitive to everything that was in the intellectual air of the time, and there was much in it that helped Christianity. The aspect of speculative thought had long been sterile; there was a tendency to take refuge from polytheism in deism; and in particular there was a spreading belief, half-mystic, in the resurrection of the body,—a belief which drew many votaries to the worship of the Egyptian Serapis, and was in turn strengthened by that cult. The Greek character, which had long been marked by a certain quick-witted levity —the natural result of intellectual and political despair—took a new earnestness from a practical rule of life which had the sanction of a lofty hope. The Christian organization became also a political discipline. The members of every Greek congregation met together, not only for worship, but also for the management of the common affairs. In 300 A.D. the body corporate of Eastern Christians, the Greek Church, with its central administration, was already a powerful commonwealth within the Roman State.

Greek Church.

Constantine the Great saw this. The West was, on the whole, still pagan: his rival, the Senate, was pagan: the Greek East was, on the whole, Christian.

Constantinople the capital (330 A.D.)

Constantine resolved that the power of the Roman Emperor should form a close alliance with the strong and wide-spread corporation of Greek Christendom. This was one, at least, of his chief motives for that step which preserved the Empire for a thousand years, and saved Europe from premature devastation. In 330 A.D. Constantine removed the seat of Empire from the Old Rome in the West to that New Rome which he had founded in the East.

Consequence for Greeks.

The establishment of Constantinople as the capital of the Roman Empire was a turning-point in the destiny of the Greek race. The centre of political gravity was shifted from a place where all its surroundings were Latin to a place where its surroundings were mainly Greek. Officially speaking, Constantinople was at first a Latin city, and remained so for nearly four centuries. But from the first it was saturated with Greek influences: and it was certain that the Latin nucleus could not last for ever when it was steeped in a solvent so powerful and so subtle. Surely, it might be thought, the Roman yoke now became lighter than ever for Greece. The result was the opposite. Constantine reformed the whole system of the Empire. He made the Emperor practically absolute. He made the Emperor's household

Constantine's reforms.

the centre of all government. He subordinated the military power to the civil power. He organized an efficient public service. He provided for a regular administration of justice. But he greatly increased the public burdens. Heavy taxes were required to pay for a splendid court, a highly-trained staff of officials, and a strong army. The machinery of taxation introduced by Constantine seriously altered the condition of Greece.

Municipal institutions.

Hitherto the Greek cities of Greece Proper had retained their old municipal institutions. They had managed their land and raised their money in their own way. But now Constantine imposed on Greece the municipal system of Rome. This meant that the local affairs of each Greek town and the district belonging to it were henceforth to be managed by a small board of the richer land-owners, called the *curia*. This board was responsible for the land-tax payable by every holder of land within the district, and when the land-tax fell short, the members of the board had to make up the deficit out of their own pockets. The board had also to levy a capitation-tax on all merchants and artisans; and, in order to keep up the amount of this tax, it was enacted that the son of an artisan should follow

The curia.

Caste.

his father's calling. Experience shows that the institution of caste is seldom permanent except where social contact implies religious defilement. Under the Roman and Byzantine Empire the attempt to introduce caste left no lasting traces except trade-guilds, and the local division of towns into quarters. Before Constantine the cities of Greece Proper had been municipal democracies. After Constantine they were municipal oligarchies. The results of the change were, on the whole, bad for Greece. The free cultivators of the soil, richer or poorer, were steadily impoverished, and in the course of the 200 years between Constantine and Justinian the class of richer land-owners was nearly extinguished. Worse still, the national life of Greece was weakened at its source. No Greek institutions now remained around which the people could rally. The local framework within which they lived was now as foreign as the court to which they sent their taxes.

Results.

But these evils took a long time to show their depth. Though the causes of decay were working, Greece enjoyed a fair amount of material prosperity in the space between Constantine and Justinian. In the fourth and fifth centuries Syria and the Red Sea were usually insecure. This turned the trade of Central

State of Greece, 337—527 A.D.

Asia into the Black Sea, and brought the Mediterranean trade back to Greece. The Greeks kept out the northern barbarians, and the capital of wealthy refugees from the northern border came into Greece. Then, heavy as the taxes were, Constantine's regular system had at any rate increased the security of life and property by placing two established orders between the court and the people—namely, the clergy, and the lawyers.

Greece suffered a new blow from Justinian. Justinian's reign may claim the threefold splendours of war, legislation, and architecture; but it also introduced for Greece and for the Empire the era of mental degradation. In Justinian's time Athens was a university town with the prestige of a literary capital. The luxury which prevailed there was certainly modest if tried by the standard of Constantinople: the Athenian ladies might wear dresses of Chinese silk which Greek hands had embroidered with gold; the philosophers might cheer their studies with the choice vintages of Rhodes or Thasos; but, after all, the pleasures which gave the tone to Athenian life were still, as of old, better than these. Such as they were, however, they failed to awaken sympathy in the Roman Louis XIV. In 529 Justinian confiscated the

Justinian (527—565).

Schools of Athens closed (529 A.D.)

endowments which Marcus Aurelius had bestowed on the four philosophical sects of Athens. He closed that illustrious school which now for nine-hundred years had been a holy place to those who aspired to look on the face of eternal truth,—the Academy of Plato.

End of the old Literature and Art.

The end of the old Hellenic literature and art may be placed here, so far as it can be placed at any one moment. The glories of old Greece had been slowly dying: in the year 393 the Olympian games had been held for the last time; the Mysteries of Eleusis had been threatened by an imperial edict forbidding the nocturnal celebration of pagan rites, but had actually ceased only when Alaric and his Goths destroyed the temple at Eleusis; the greatest works of Pheidias —the statues, in ivory and gold, of Athene and of the Olympian Zeus—had left Greece in the fifth century. And now, in the sixth, a night of bigotry and ignorance settles down on the empire, to last for two-hundred years.

Invasions and immigrations.

Tribe after tribe had come pouring down on the Danube from the north. The Goths under Alaric had been followed by the Huns under Attila; after the Huns came their kinsmen, the Bulgarians and the Avars. Now and again fierce invaders swept over Greece; then, in the seventh century, comes

that great wave of Slavonian immigration which effaced so much of the old Hellenic tradition even in the names of places. The Slavonians made permanent settlements in Greece; but still in the main it was by the Greeks that the Empire was saved on its northern frontier. 442 A.D.

At last, however, at the beginning of the eighth century, it looked as if the end had come indeed. The Roman Empire and the Greek nationality seemed alike doomed to destruction. They were hard pressed by two deadly foes: in Europe, by the Bulgarians; in Asia, by the Saracens. Just then a great man arose, and saved them. This was Leo III., the Isaurian. With Leo the Byzantine Empire may be said to begin. The story of Greek subjection enters on its second great chapter; the Roman chapter is closed, and the Byzantine chapter opens. Leo, the Isaurian (716–741).

No hard-and-fast line can be drawn between the Roman Empire and the Byzantine. There was no break at any one point. The Christian Emperors of Constantinople went on calling themselves Emperors of the Romans down to the Turkish conquest. The Greek subjects of the Eastern empire went on calling themselves Romaioi, Romans. 'Byzantine' is a conventional term, meant to express the fact that a II. Byzantine period (716—1453).

certain change passed over the character of the Roman Empire in the East. We must see how this change came about, and what it meant.

Course of the transition.

Constantinople had been originally a Latin city. Latin was the language of the court and of the government. Constantine's centralizing reforms were essentially Roman in spirit. And in one respect he gave Constantinople a marked resemblance to Rome. He kept up at Constantinople the custom of gratuitously distributing grain to the needy part of the city population. This gave the populace of the capital an interest in common with the imperial court. Both court and populace wished to see the provincials taxed to the last farthing that could be wrung from them. The popular opinion of Constantinople was thus placed in direct antagonism to that of the provinces. Constantine's system had now been in force for more than 300 years. The grinding taxation had gone on. Population was still dwindling. The neglect of roads, bridges, and harbours had gone far to destroy communication. Each provincial town was more or less isolated in its own narrow district. The futile caste-system had at least served to check the intercourse of classes. The grand scheme for crystallizing society had failed. Human life was slowly mortifying within

that iron framework by which the Roman Empire had thought to fix it in one attitude for ever. There was little interchange of ideas, and there were not many ideas to exchange. Mental activity was almost extinct under the dead weight of ignorance and superstition.

Saracen conquests.

It was at this moment that the Saracens issued from Arabia in the first enthusiasm of militant unitarians, believing that, as God is one and has one prophet, so the faithful are one army with one cause. In a few years of the seventh century they rent away from the Eastern Empire its southern provinces in Syria, Egypt, and Africa. In the provinces which now remained to the Empire the majority of the population was Greek. Hence the Greek nation and the imperial government were drawn into closer connection. Reforms

Reforms were urgently needed, and these reforms were now gradually made under the influence of a public opinion which was mainly Greek. The provinces had been divided into departments called 'themes.' This division was now made the basis of the military system. A general and a corps were assigned to each 'theme.' The army thus became more efficient for defence, and less capable of united rebellion. Finance was further centralized. Hitherto

the free municipalities had been allowed to adjust the incidence of the land-tax at which they were assessed, and to collect for their own district. This power was not transferred to imperial officers, and the emperor was henceforth his own chancellor of the exchequer; a change which worked well, for, while taxation became more productive, the condition of the people showed improvement. The administration of justice was facilitated by the removal of a serious practical hindrance. Justinian's code had been too voluminous for general use. Leo III. now issued a standard abridgment of it in Greek, and this 'Ecloga,' superseding all other epitomes, restored uniformity to the practice of the law-courts. Socially the transition from the Roman phase of the Empire to the Byzantine is marked by the final adoption of Greek as the official language; by the prevalence of Greek manners; and by the identification both of Emperor and of people with the Orthodox Greek Church. But the Greek nationality which thus became the basis of the Empire was the Asiatic, not the European. Since Justinian's reign the Greeks of Asia had come to treat the Greeks of Europe as mere provincials. At the beginning of the eighth century the Greeks of Greece Proper were often called *Helladikoi*.

'Helladikoi.'

All Greek subjects of the Empire called themselves *Romaioi*. The name of *Hellenes* was reserved either for the ancient Greeks or for the adherents of Hellenic paganism. Hence the fitness of the term Byzantine, borrowed from the name of the older Greek city on site of the Latin Constantinople. 'Byzantine' means that the military Roman monarchy, as reformed by Constantine, had now been again reformed under the influence of Greek ideas, and had assumed a more decidedly Greek aspect. And this new phase is called Byzantine rather than Hellenic, because the Greek ideas and usages which it embodied were those of the Asiatic Greeks, not those of European Hellas.

Meaning of 'Byzantine.'

Under the Byzantine Empire European Greece was quietly prosperous for four hundred years, from the eighth century to the twelfth. It was, indeed, merely an outlying province, rarely visited by the Emperors, and little thought of save for the taxes which it sent to Constantinople. Let us imagine a traveller visiting Greece any time between 900 and 1100 A.D.: what would he have found?

Medieval Greece, 716—1204 A.D.

In the outward aspect of the cities he would have seen much of the old Hellenic character. Many of the ancient temples—some of them now converted to

General aspect.

Christian use—were still perfect or in fair preservation. Barbarous invaders had made some havoc, and sheer neglect had done its work, especially in the Peloponnesus; but most of the large towns could still show large remains of ancient architecture. Our visitor would have looked in vain, no doubt, for the great masterpieces of sculptor and painter; most of them had long since gone to the New Rome or to the Old. He would have heard the Greek language, strangely impoverished, indeed, and a good deal corrupted in grammar, but not as yet alloyed with many foreign elements; and, if he had talked to men of the better class, he would have found that the old Greek literature was still read. But his chief feeling would be the sense that a great wave of social change had at some time swept over Greece, not, indeed, obliterating all the land-marks of the past, yet greatly altering the surface and the life.

Names of places.

First, it would strike him how the people seemed to have forgotten the old names of places, even the most famous. Sea-port towns, indeed, had generally kept their own names—as Corinth, Argos, Methonê, Patras. But he would find with wonder that Delphi was known as Kastri, that Marathon had become Vrana, that Salamis was Kiluri, that Platæa was Kochla, that

Mycenæ was Kharvata, that Olympia was Miraka; even the great mountain-ranges had often taken new titles—Parnassus was Liakura, Helicon was Zagora, Cyllene was Ziria. Then in a great part of the rich plains, and on the lower slopes of the hills, he would find a population living on good terms with the Greek, yet of a very distinct physical type—mostly tall, robust, and of a blond complexion—with a distinct language of their own, too, and a distinct character, formed by the inherited habits of a life divided between guerilla warfare and the occupation of shepherds or husbandmen, and marked by an evident dislike to the life of towns. They had their tribes, of which the chiefs formed a nobility—each tribe being subdivided into clans under patriarchs—and dwelt mostly in scattered groups of huts, built in woods or on river-banks. These were the descendants of Slavonians who had long ago settled in Greece, and who were chiefly graziers. At the present day the Greek mountains exhibit for the most part crags of bare limestone, only varied by scanty verdure or tufts of stunted underwood. But on many of those mountains the medieval visitor would have seen a dark mantle of forest: and, if he had climbed them, his guide would have shown him many a spot in the thick wood on the

Slavonians in Greece.

hill-tops where some Greek anchorite of the seventh century had sought refuge from the pagan Slavonians who first settled in the plains beneath, driven from their northern seats by the conquering Bulgarians or Avars.

Agriculture.

He would not have met with any large extent of cornfields. The Slavonians in Greece were more of a pastoral than an agricultural people, though they were not unskilled in tillage,—their favourite crops, we are told, being millet and rye. And the roads over the hills—once excellent—were now so bad that any large transport of grain had become impossible. But near every town and village he would have seen small patches of corn raised by spade-husbandry: also olive-groves, orchards, vineyards, where light toil reaped a rich reward, giving Greece a monopoly of the choicest oils, wines, and fruits. The groups of labourers among those vines and fruit-trees would be made up of three classes, though a stranger probably would not have seen much outward difference between them. Free men would be there, working as hired labourers for a wage. Others would be mingled with them, who were neither free citizens nor slaves belonging to a master, but serfs bound to the soil, and jealously protected by the imperial

Serfdom and slavery.

government, who looked on the produce of their labour as most important to the treasury, and took good care that no grasping landlord should make them work at manufactures for his own profit. Lastly there would be some ordinary slaves employed on the land by their owner—not very many, however. It had become so easy for a rural slave in Greece to escape into the Slavonian or Bulgarian settlements that it was necessary to treat them better than formerly, and this made them too expensive to be largely used in agricultural work. Rural no less than domestic slavery, however, survived in some measure down to the Turkish conquest.

Manufactures.

But if our medieval traveller wished to discover the true spring of Greek energy and prosperity, he would turn from the fields to the towns. The silk-worm had been brought into Greece from China in Justinian's reign. Medieval Thebes and Athens flourished by the manufacture of silk almost as Manchester has flourished by cotton. Their marts could show many other costly wares besides—woollen fabrics of gorgeous hues, dresses embroidered with gold, jewellery, and ornamented arms.

Commerce.

If the stranger visited the southern port of Monemvasia —whence malmsey took its name—or the harbour of the Peiræus, he would be in the midst of a scene as

busy as the Rialto of Venice in later days. Under the Byzantine Empire the trade of India and China passed through Central Asia, north of the Caliph's dominions, to the Euxine, and thence through the Ægean to the West. The Greek marine, both mercantile and naval, was the largest in the world. The Greeks had in their hands almost all the commerce with the Black Sea and with the West. They carried to Europe the perfumes, pearls, and jewels of India and Arabia—above all, their spices, then largely used at table, and for incense in churches—the silks of China—the tortoise-shell of Africa—as well as the oils, fruits, and wines, the textures, arms, and jewellers' work of the Empire itself.

Byzantine currency.

The wealth of the Byzantine world from the eighth century to the twelfth is sufficiently shown by a single fact. The Byzantine Empire supplied Western Europe with almost the whole of the gold coin which was then in circulation. The long stability of the Byzantine gold currency is a remarkable proof of prosperity and of prudence. Contrast it with the progressive depreciation under the earlier Roman Empire. In the three centuries between Augustus and Gallienus the Roman gold standard was gradually depressed to a degree which might be stated

in English terms by saying that a gold sovereign had become worth about twelve shillings; while the silver currency had been at last annihilated by the issue of a base substitute, to such effect as if an English silver shilling had become worth less than a copper penny. The result was wide-spread misery—a general paralysis of labour, and wholesale destruction of capital. During the whole course of the 900 years which separate Constantine I. from Constantine XI., the gold byzant —the unit of the Eastern gold coinage—maintained its value unaltered.

Byzantine decline: 1057 —1204 A.D.

The Byzantine Empire reached the height of its prosperity at the end of the tenth century, and the beginning of its decline may be dated from the middle of the eleventh. Intelligent centralization had gradually passed into stupid despotism. The Emperor was absolute, and his will was no longer exercised through able officials. Basil I. had taken the administration away (867-886 A.D.) from the highly trained public service which Constantine had instituted, and transferred it to the eunuchs of the palace. The middle class, though never extinguished, was diminished, and the higher Byzantine clergy discountenanced popular progress. Byzantine commerce, too, had begun to suffer from Italian competition and from piracy.

Character of the Byzantine age.

But it was long before these things began to dim the brilliant surface of the Byzantine world. The glimpses which we catch of medieval Constantinople reveal a gorgeous picture, in which the most incongruous colours are quaintly blended. It was above all things the age of formula; in all things the letter had prevailed over the spirit. The stately ritual which was celebrated under the dome of St. Sophia had its worldly counterpart in the elaborate etiquette of the palace above the Golden Horn, and found a sombre reflection in the ponderous pedantries or puerile conceits which too often disguise the solid worth of Byzantine literature. The mind of the age could no longer rise to the higher levels of art. It was too rigid; it was also too ingenious. It showed itself more characteristically in clever mechanism. The Emperor Theophilus in the ninth century had a childish delight in costly toys, which were executed under the supervision of the eminent mathematician Leo, afterwards archbishop of Thessalonica: thus at the entrance to the hall of state in the palace of Constantinople there stood a golden plane-tree, with artificial birds wrought in gold and precious stones, birds that could flutter their wings and sing,—vultures that screamed and lions that roared,—while organs concealed behind

the panels of the walls filled the apartments with soft music. Sometimes this ingenuity took a more useful turn. The system of beacon-telegraphs was perfected, and in the Emperor's council-chamber there was a dial on whose face could be read the signals flashed by fire from the borders of Armenia or the shores of the Adriatic.

The Court.

With all this there was a strong dash of barbarism in the manners of the time. We hear of scenes at the Byzantine court which recall the orgies of Alexander in Asia. The Emperor Manuel was once giving an entertainment in the palace when two of his guests quarrelled. One of them struck at the other with his sword. The Emperor put out his arm to arrest the blow, and was wounded. The Empress Euphrosyne, the wife of Alexius III., was almost a Byzantine Cleopatra. Her husband found it expedient to send his lady to a convent on the Black Sea, but he afterwards recalled her to court; and then we are told how the populace of the capital shouted, as Euphrosyne was seen once more surrounded by a gay cavalcade on her way to one of her great hunting-parties, dexterously managing her spirited horse, calling to her hounds, and with a falcon perched on her embroidered glove.

The Army.

On the whole it is refreshing to turn from the Byzan-

tine court to the Byzantine camp. For several centuries the Byzantine army was the finest in the world, and its artillery department had a special advantage in the use of the combustible substance called Greek fire, thrown from brazen tubes. The Byzantines had formidable foes. The Saracen cavalry was mail-clad: the Bulgarian warriors are described as sheathed *cap-a-pie* in iron; both nations had engines of war for sieges and for the field. Yet neither Saracen nor Bulgarian could meet the Byzantines on equal terms.

Northern Invaders.

Danger threatened the Empire from both north and east, but not in the same form. The northern peoples who poured across the Danube came mainly in search of new homes. Their tendency was to settle down into kingdoms of moderate size, which the Empire could hold in check, or with which it could live on tolerably good terms. Thus the Slavonian settlements in Servia and Croatia were placed there to check the Avars. For a long period the Emperors managed to have peaceable relations with the kingdom of Bulgaria: and from the eleventh century they were generally at peace with the Russians. But the Mohammedan nations who burst into Asia Minor from the east were driven by a fanatic impulse to universal conquest, with

Eastern Invaders.

which no compromise was possible. With them the Empire had to fight for bare life. It beat the Saracens at last. But just then a fatal mistake was made. In 1045 Constantine IX. destroyed the little kingdom of Armenia, an Asiatic Switzerland, with a Christian population of sturdy mountaineers. Thus the gates of Asia Minor were left open.

A worse foe than the Saracen found his way in. Seljuk Turks.
The Saracens, a Semitic people, were fiery warriors, but they also knew how to value civilization and art. These new-comers were neither Semitic nor Aryan, but Turanian, of a stock akin to the old Bulgarians, and to the Magyars, or Hungarians. These were the Turks,—not, at first, the Ottoman Turks, but a tribe then far stronger—the Seljuks. The Seljuks were a nomad people. They knew nothing of city-life. When they had devoured one district they went on to another. In the eleventh century the Seljuk Turks spread over Asia Minor. They founded the Empire of Roum (that is, Rome), 1080 A.D.
and fixed their head-quarters close to Constantinople itself—at Nicæa. From Nicæa they fell back before the crusaders to Iconium. But the death-blow to the 1095-99 A.D.
Byzantine Empire did not come from the Seljuks: it was dealt by the Fourth Crusade.

Fourth Crusade (1200-4 A.D.)

To us Westerns the very name of the Crusades is still like that talisman with which Walter Scott has linked it: every soldier of the Cross is a Knight of the Leopard. To Eastern Christendom, however, the crusaders appeared in a very different light. A Godfrey or a Tancred could not always restrain half-disciplined bands of free-lances from pillaging the country through which they passed. A Greek Christian was poorly consoled for a ruined homestead or a broken head by the fact that the giver of these gifts had the Latin Cross on the shoulder of his doublet. Various causes, political and religious, had long been making bad blood between East and West. The Fourth Crusade brought matters to a head. The Fourth Crusade was a marauding expedition by 20,000 brigands, whose deliberate purpose was to divide the spoil of the Byzantine Empire according to a pre-arranged plan, and who mocked the sacred ensign under which they marched by making it the pretext of an infamous design. History records no crime which, in calculated rapacity, in sustained cruelty, and in studied hypocrisy, is blacker than the Fourth Crusade.

Latin Empire of Roumania (1204—1261 A.D.)

In 1204 the Byzantine Empire, strictly so called, fell, and the first Latin Emperor—now styled the

Emperor of Roumania—was set up at Constantinople. At the same time three Latin principalities were established in European Greece. One of them, the principality of Thessalonica, very soon passed into Greek hands, but the other two were more lasting. The Latin principality of the Morea lasted from 1205 to 1387. The Dukedom of Athens lasted from 1205 to 1456.

Dukedom of Athens.

It is a picturesque episode in the long story of Athens, this period of the Frankish Dukedom. Its memories live in the poetry of those centuries, and later. Dante and Chaucer, like Shakspere, call Theseus the Duke of Athens. Boccaccio, in the story of the princess Alathiel, gives a picture of the Athenian ducal court; and an old Catalan chronicler, a Spanish Froissart, describes its splendid pageants and tournaments. Meanwhile other bits of the Byzantine Empire had become Greek kingdoms. At the south-east corner of the Black Sea a young Greek adventurer had set up the Empire of Trebizond in the beautiful country between the river Halys and the snowy peaks of the Caucasus, a land of corn-fields and forest-clad hills, of crag and torrent. For 250 years the Empire of Trebizond maintained a luxurious court, disputed the commerce of the Black Sea with Genoa, and proved

Empire of Trebizond.

how the want of moral worth can neutralize the most bountiful gifts of nature.

The Palæologi.

But it was in the Greek Empire of Nicæa that the true Byzantine tradition lingered. In 1261 the Emperor of Nicæa, Michael Palæologus, succeeded in wresting Constantinople from the Latins. He and his successors, the Palæologi, ruled Constantinople from 1261 till the Turkish conquest in 1453. These two centuries of slow death are usually called the Greek Empire, as distinguished from the Byzantine Empire, strictly so called, which fell in 1204. But in all its main characteristics this Greek Empire was essentially a feeble revival of the Byzantine. The Empire had now shrunk to narrow limits. It consisted of Thessalonica, of a province in the south of the Morea, and of a few towns near Constantinople. Still the Palæologi called themselves Emperors of the Romans to the end.

The 'Greek' Empire(1261—1453 A.D.)

Rise of Ottoman Turks.

The end had come very near. About 1250 A.D. a Turkish chief led into Asia Minor from the far East a little tribe of some 400 tents. Under this chief's son, Othman, the petty tribe rapidly grew. Othman's son, Orkhan, the real founder of the Ottoman dominion, threw off his allegiance to the decaying Seljuk Empire. The Ottomans gained their first footing in

1326 to 1453 A.D.

Europe when they took Gallipoli on the Dardanelles in 1356. A century more, and they were at the walls of Constantinople.

When the hour had come the last Constantine met his fate like a man. The Ottomans were to deliver their assault on the morrow. That evening Constantine XI. went round the posts of his troops; he received the eucharist in St. Sophia, according to that Latin rite which the founder of his house had accepted; he asked forgiveness of those whom he might have wronged; and next morning, when the Ottomans stormed Constantinople, he fell in the breach.

Capture of Constantinople, 1453.

The Empire of the East, Roman and Byzantine, had lasted 1100 years when it perished. It has two claims on the gratitude of mankind.

Merits of the Eastern Empire.

First, the benefits which it conferred on its subjects were, on the whole, greater than any government had yet maintained so widely and so long. These benefits were chiefly three. The administration of justice from the eighth century to the eleventh was more generally efficient than it had ever before been over an equally large area; a merit which is not obliterated by such later corruptions of justice as marked and hastened the Byzantine decline. A

middle class was never lost; for, even when those smaller land-holders who represented the old middle class of the independent Greek commonwealths had been impoverished or effaced by the double incubus of the great estates and of taxation, an urban middle class was sustained by the extension and prosperity of Byzantine commerce. And a literary tradition was preserved, which, though often deformed by pedantry, was still as a silver lamp to the dark ages.

Next, this Empire kept the gates of Europe, and gave the West time to grow. It seemed a great deliverance when, in 1683, John Sobieski turned back the Ottomans from the walls of Vienna. But, had it not been for that Empire on the Bosporus, hordes of warriors as fierce as the Ottomans would, centuries before, have swept the face of Europe, not stopping at the Danube, but spreading havoc to the Rhine or the Seine, and from the Seine, it may be, carrying sword and fire to the banks of the Thames or the Tweed. The Eastern Empire has been too often judged as if it resembled that effeminate son of Priam who carried away the light and charm of Hellas to a new and uncongenial home: but in truth that Empire was less a Paris than a Hector, the champion who

alone saved the European Troy. Thrice a strong enemy came up against it, and with each of the three that trusty warden of our marches waged a combat of four hundred years: it beat back the Persian; it beat back the Saracen; and, after a third struggle of four centuries, it was only in death that it yielded to the Turk.

III. Turkish Period: 1453—1821.

Here, in 1453, the third and last chapter of Greek subjection opens—the Turkish chapter. Under Turkish domination the Greek race was brought to the lowest condition which the long record of its existence can show. No other race, probably, having once fallen so deep, has again risen to freedom and civilization. Just here it is that the marvellous vitality of Greek national life is most strikingly seen. Those who would read this dark chapter aright must carefully distinguish between national unhappiness and national degradation. The crowning proof that a foreign domination is intellectual and moral death to its subjects is when those subjects have been brought to feel contented with a mere animal existence, and have ceased to resent—even to feel—the privation of everything which imparts a higher dignity and value to human life.

The Turk has been called unspeakable: a bold rhe-

torical figure, when we consider how much he has been spoken of. In one sense no epithet could well be less happy. There is nothing ineffable about the Turkish system as such. Its distinctive feature is its rigidly matter-of-fact character. It consists in literal adherence to a few general rules. Even among well-educated Christians it may frequently be observed that few persons are apt to be more cruel than a conscientious man who has no imagination. Now the average Turk has not much imagination; his conscience is such as is formed by his religion—that is, by the broad views and injunctions of the Korân; and his education is not calculated to correct or moderate this. The average Turk is absolutely indifferent to the results produced by applying his general rules: all that is the will of Allah. What he, as a servant of the Prophet, has to do, is to do what the Korân says, or the Sultan; and this he does with varying degrees of integrity, but not, generally, with any diabolical malice; often, however, without that decent moderation which armed strength is apt to forget, unless it is restrained by conscience, by cant, or by some power of seeing as the victim sees.

Greek life under Turkey.

Let us try and see what Greek life under Turkey was like when it was about at its worst—say in

the year 1560. Suppose we are walking near a white-washed Turkish village in Bœotia. That Greek who is working in the fields is the tenant of a Turkish landlord to whom he pays a head-rent. The Turkish landlord holds his land as a fief directly from the Sultan. The Turk's father was a cavalry soldier, who received this fief as a good-service reward, on condition of taking the field again, when required, with a certain number of men. These fiefs were of three classes—there were about 2000 of them in all in Greece—enabling the Sultan to call out about 7000 cavalry. In the sixteenth century they were made hereditary in most places, passing on from father to son. The Turk never troubled himself about tilling the land: he left that to the natives; his one business in life was to keep up his military skill; and for a long time these Turkish land-holders were the best light cavalry in Europe.

If our Greek friend in the fields had only to pay his rent—which is not very heavy—his poverty-stricken air would be hard to understand. But if you pursue your enquiries, the case will become clearer. It is now about a month since the harvest. A great heap of corn, not yet threshed, is lying in the open air near the Greek's house. This means that the Turkish

tax-gatherer has not been here yet. The Greek farmer has to pay the Government a tax in kind on the whole yield of his land,—a fraction varying from a third to a tithe. To prevent frauds on the exchequer, the whole produce, once harvested, must be let alone till the tax-collector comes in person, and sees the government heap separated from the farmer's heap. For the same primitive reason there must be no private threshing in closed barns. This is inconvenient, particularly in a wet season, but still the Greek farmer could get on pretty well if there was not another burden on his back. Our Greek is a Christian, and so he has to pay the haratch. The haratch is a capitation-tax, paid to the Ottoman Porte by all rayahs, that is, by all male infidels above the age of ten, excepting priests, the maimed, the blind, and the paralytic. For what says the Korân? 'Fight against those who forbid not what God and his Prophet have forbidden, and who profess not the true religion of those unto whom the book has been delivered, until they pay tribute and be brought low.' In the middle of the sixteenth century the whole revenue of Turkey was not much more than six millions. This tax on male infidels then yielded about three and a half millions. Our Greek's neighbour on the next farm is

The haratch.

an idle, swaggering Albanian, whose military or rather predatory tastes have found him some grace in the eyes of the landlord; but, idle though he is, he is better off than our plodding Greek. He has no haratch to pay: and why? He has embraced the Mohammedan religion.

The Greek is a poor man, then; but in this quiet country life he may at least have a happy home. Consoling himself with this reflection, the traveller strolls on to the village, when his attention is attracted by a remarkable sight. Remember that our scene is laid about the year 1560. The whole place is in a stir. The open place in the middle of the village is full of people. Huddled on one side of it are the Greeks of the village—the men pale and stern, the women with tears streaming down their faces and wringing their hands in the bitterest anguish, or else motionless, as if stupefied. On the other side of the open space stand some Turkish officers,—the commissioners sent hither by the Pasha of Eubœa, to whose government the Bœotian village belongs: a small armed force surrounds them. Before the Turkish officers stand the Greek elders of the village,—old men, silent, with their heads bowed and their hands crossed on their breasts. Behind the old

men stand all the male children of the village between the ages of six and nine. The village, with its district, is but a small place, and perhaps there may be some thirty of these male children between six and nine. After a careful scrutiny, the Turkish officers pick out six of the thirty children.

What was to be done with those Christian children in the year of grace 1560?

The Child-tribute.

They were to be sent—along with hundreds of others from many scores of villages—to Constantinople. At Constantinople they were to be distributed through four large colleges, and there to be educated in the Mohammedan religion, as household slaves of the Sultan. Thenceforth they were to be separated from every tie of country and of race. As they grew up, some passed into the domestic service of the palace or the pashas; a few of the most intelligent were trained for posts in the administration; those of the strongest physique were enrolled in the corps of Janissaries. The Mosaic law excluded the stranger and the hired servant from the Passover, but admitted the servant bought with money. Just so the Janissaries, as household slaves, stood in a closer relation to the Sultan than any of his free troops. The Janissaries were originally celibate soldiers, vowed to

The Janissaries.

the service of the Prophet and the Sultan. They were the peculiar instrument of Ottoman conquest. For a long period the Janissaries were chiefly recruited from the tribute of male children which was levied, once in every four years, on the Christian Greeks. The child-tribute was abolished by the Porte in 1687, partly because agriculture could not spare so much able-bodied labour, partly because the increase of the Mussulman population had made the Porte independent of this recruiting source for the army. The Janissaries, too, had acquired not only the right to marry, but also, from 1566, the right to enroll their sons in the corps, and had become jealous of admitting the Greek tribute-children. It would be easy to argue that the child-tribute was really after all a very fine thing for the Greeks. No doubt it opened to many individuals far more prosperous careers than they could have had if they had stayed in their villages. Very possibly some struggling parents may have been well content to have a son taken off their hands on such terms. It is not so easy to say how many homes that tribute must have left desolate, how many hearts it must have broken; and most certainly it was fatal to all the better hopes of the nation. The manhood of a tormented people can

Abolition of child-tribute.

fight against every plague of Egypt except the last; but there could be no future for Greece while every household in the land, where the voice of children was heard, lay under the continual shadow of a power more appalling than the Angel of Death, a power which not only rent asunder the bonds of national loyalty and of natural affection, but which forced parent and child alike to believe that in this world and in the world to come they were divided by an impassable abyss.

Venetians in Greece, 1684—1718.

Just at the time when the child-tribute ceased, another event favoured the revival of Greece. Venice wrested the Morea from Turkey, and kept it for over thirty years. The Venetian conquest of the Morea takes lustre from association with the name of a great man, Francesco Morosini. Those who were at Venice in the latest years of Morosini's life saw his portrait in the hall of the Great Council there, looking down on them from among the faces of the illustrious dead, and were told that Morosini alone in the annals of the Republic had received that honour during his lifetime. After his conquest of the Peloponnesus, Morosini, now surnamed 'the Peloponnesian,' was made Doge of Venice. He received the ducal insignia while he was still in Greece. The investiture took

place at the little island of Poros in the Saronic Gulf, —the island in which, 2000 years before, Demosthenes had expired: a curious link between the fortunes of Athens and Venice, the crownless queen of the Ægean and the conquering bride of the Adriatic.

When the Venetians came into the Morea it was a wilderness. The Turkish system had for 200 years been making Greece a desert, and now war had finished the work. Roads were impassable. Bridges were broken down. The richest land was fallow. The towns were in ruins. The Hanoverians who served with Morosini complained that their red uniforms spoilt their sport in hunting buffaloes. Greek commerce had long ago been destroyed by the pirates who literally swarmed in the Greek waters, and who had regular stations from which they levied black-mail on the coast-towns and villages. If a Greek fishing-boat ventured a few miles to sea, it was at the risk of the crew presently finding themselves galley-slaves on board a Maltese or Barbary corsair. The Venetians restored commerce between the Levant and the West; but they insisted that the trade should pass through Venice, and their protective system damaged the Greek markets by lowering the price of exports. State of the Morea (1688 A.D.)

The Venetian Government in the Morea, care-

Fall of Venetian rule, 1715—1718.

fully organized as it had been, was overthrown by the Turks with singular ease as soon as their troubles elsewhere left their hands free to set about it in earnest. The chief cause of this was that the Venetians had not incorporated the Greek population with the ruling caste by developing local institutions, and so the Venetian sway in the Morea was to the end a domination which could be maintained only by force of arms. One lasting benefit, however, the Venetians conferred on Greece. They familiarized the Greeks, who under Turkey had been declining towards semi-barbarism, with the almost forgotten influences of a higher civilization. The Catholic clergy in the Morea did much for education: the college at Tripolitza was especially successful. So the Venetians, when their brief rule passed away, left behind them the germs of a nobler social life.

Its result.

The Greek Revolution.

The Greek Revolution, which began in 1821, was not a sudden insurrection to which the people were stung by maddening wrongs. It was the necessary result of a movement which had grown very slowly, obedient to a law as sure as that the tree which winter has stripped shall put forth its leaves in the spring. The causes which prepared Greek liberation had been working for more than a

General causes.

century before the first blow was struck. The English Revolution of 1688, the American War of Independence, the volcanic revenge of suppressed nature in France,—these great events stirred a feeling which spread in slowly widening circles to every region in which the strong could still deprive the weak of those things which God gave to all. As soon as the Greek race—so long torpid and benumbed from sheer helpless wretchedness—came to comprehend their position, and to be capable of concerted action, it was only a question of time: sooner or later it was certain that they must rise. In the last century three causes went to give the Greeks this light and this power.

Special preparatives

First, the Sultans organized a service of highly-educated Greek officials, whose position gradually gave them some influence in protecting the Christian subjects of the Porte, and in opening a career to Greeks of ability.

Secondly, Greek commerce was greatly extended during the latter part of the eighteenth century. This was due partly to the commercial treaties between Turkey and Russia of 1779 and 1783. By these treaties the Greek Christians of Turkey were enabled to trade under the Russian flag. Then Turkey managed to keep out of the wars in which so

many European countries were involved by the French Revolution, and so the Turkish flag could bring Greek ships into harbours which were closed against the merchant marine of most other states.

Thirdly, there was a literary revival of the Greek language. The first object of this revival was to establish a written dialect in which all Greeks could exchange ideas. The literary language had, of course, lived on among the educated without a break from Byzantine times. But the popular spoken language had been barbarized more and more during the centuries of Turkish rule, and, except in the large towns, had come to be little better than a patois with a number of local forms. By the efforts of a few able men, who clearly saw that this was the first step towards the recovery of Greek independence, the Greek language was once more fitted to be the organ of a national mind. As soon as this had been done, education began to be the most powerful agency of national revival.

Religion.

All these causes helped to bring the Greeks together, to define their common aims, and to quicken their desire for political freedom. At the same time a special cause quickened their desire for religious

freedom. In the tenth century Greek missionaries had brought the first tidings of the Gospel to the Russians at Kieff. And now, in the eighteenth century, it was Russia that acquired the power of protecting the Greek Church in Turkey. This protectorate, for such it was in reality though not in name, dates from a treaty between Russia and Turkey in 1774. The Greek Revolution was in its origin quite as much religious as political. There was a general tendency to identify Greek orthodoxy with Greek nationality. This will be easily understood if we glance at the past of the Greek Church. Christianity, as we have seen, had become a regenerating influence in the Greek character before the end of the third century. The Greek Church assumed its distinctive aspect about a hundred years later. The Arian heresy arose in the fourth century. The Emperors immediately after Constantine favoured Arianism, but the mass of their Greek subjects were strongly opposed to it. The title Orthodox, as applied to the Greek Church, dates from the fourth century. It denotes the creed received by the Greek people as opposed to the creed favoured by the Roman Emperors. The popular character thus imprinted on the Orthodox Church was confirmed by the controversy of 150 years concerning image-worship.

The Orthodox Church.

This was really a political struggle between the Emperors, who wished to complete centralization by extending the civil power over the Church, and the people, allied with the secular clergy, who maintained the independence of the popular Church in matters of faith and worship. The people prevailed in the end.

Their allies in that struggle, the secular clergy, have been their allies ever since. The monastic orders of regular clergy furnished the prelates of the Eastern Church, and were in nearer relations with the Byzantine court, as afterwards with the Ottoman government. The secular clergy, on the other hand—the parish priests—have for centuries been the trusted friends of the people. During the Turkish centuries, when the Greeks in Greece did not see much of the prelates, the parish priests established claims to the attachment of the nation which can never be forgotten: to them it was in great part due that the heart of the people did not utterly fail, that the light of knowledge was not wholly quenched.

Orthodoxy and Nationality.

In 1821, then, it was natural that the Greeks should think of Greek Orthodoxy as if it meant almost the same thing as Greek nationality. The Porte, too, accustomed its Christian subjects to

identify their religion with their political cause; thus the Turks used the phrase 'Roman nation' to denote all Eastern Christians, Greek, Albanian, Wallach, and Bulgarian. Russia, however, very soon cleared up the Greek views of this matter. The action of Russia in 1823 showed that it is possible to belong to the Greek Church and yet not to sympathize with the aspirations of Greek nationality. The disenchantment, if somewhat rude, was wholesome. The Greek Revolution was thenceforth seen to be distinctly political, an affair of the Greek nation, not of the Greek Church; but none the less the Greek Church retains, and will always retain, that place which centuries of trial have confirmed to it in the affections of the Greek people.

Population in 1821.

When the Greeks rose in 1821 there were about two millions of Greeks in European Greece and the islands, and about the same number of Turks. In Asia Minor, Russia, Cyprus, and elsewhere there were perhaps another million and a half of Greeks, making a total of three and a half millions. There are now between one and a half and two millions of Greeks in the Greek kingdom,* and about five millions elsewhere

* The results of the Greek census just published (Feb. 1880) show a total population of 1,679,000, against 1,457,000 in 1870—an average annual increase of 1·69 per cent. From 1860 to 1870 the annual increase was 1 per cent.

—a total of six and a half to seven millions. Turkey had ruled Greece for nearly 400 years. When Greece came out of that bondage, what shall we say had been the net result of the ordeal? The answer cannot be doubtful: that fiery trial had renewed the temper of the Greek nationality; much of the dross had been purged from it in a furnace seven times heated, and, instead of a glittering alloy, there now came forth metal rough but sound, out of which patient toil might yet weld a worthy nation. When the Turks took Constantinople the Greek race ceased to be represented by the hybrid Greeks of Asia. The representation reverted to the Greeks of Europe: and there it had been vested for four centuries in the class on whom the prosperity of a country, if it is to be firm, must always rest at last—those who eat the fruits of the ground in the sweat of their brow. The Greek Revolution produced no great general and no great statesman, though it produced many instances of unsurpassed heroism. Its real glory is this—that as it sprang from the truest instincts which make a man, so to the end it was loyal to that origin, and showed the world how, without leaders of genius, the old saying still holds good when a resolute nation means to be free—where there is the will, there is the way.

Result of Turkish rule.

National centre of gravity changed.

Character of the Revolution.

Freedom departed from Greece when Philip of Macedon conquered: from Macedon the power over Greece passed to Rome—from Rome, to Constantinople: now it has once more come back to Greece. We look back over these two-and-twenty centuries and we ask: Do the modern Greeks indeed represent those old Greeks who shaped the mind of Europe? And, if they do, what credentials can they show? What are the ties which link them to the far past, and what is the strength of each tie?

Links between Ancient and Modern Greece.

The ties which connect the Greeks of to-day with the ancient Greeks are chiefly three—race, character, and language.

Race.

First, as to race. In 1830, when Europe was in its first Philhellenic glow, Professor Fallmerayer of Munich amazed the world by announcing his discovery that the Greeks were not Greeks, but Slavonians. It is needless to say that so brilliant a paradox commanded wide applause. Carl Hopf's work has now reduced it to its just dimensions. In the middle of the eighth century—in 747 A.D.—a great pestilence swept over the Byzantine Empire. The Greek population of Greece Proper was greatly diminished: and many of the survivors were transported to Constantinople to fill up the gaps there.

The partially depopulated districts in Greece were occupied by Slavonians. From 750 to 850 A.D. the Slavonians formed the majority of the population in Greece. This was the period at which the Slavonian names of places were multiplied most rapidly. But then the tide began to turn. The superior social civilization of the Greek element tended to repair its numbers. From the middle of the ninth century the Greeks in Greece began to do to the Slavonians just what the Slavonians, in their old home, had for the same reason done to the Turanian Bulgarians. The Slavonians, being superior in civilization to the Bulgarians, had gradually absorbed them. Just so the Greeks, being superior in civilization to the Slavonians, gradually absorbed them. The process of Hellenizing the Slavonians went on steadily in Greece until, in about 200 years, it was practically complete. For every one Slavonic name of a place in the Peloponnesus, there are now, according to Leake's computation, about ten Greek names, either ancient or early medieval. Thus, between 850 and 1050, was formed the basis of the modern Greek nation. It contains, as all would allow, a large infusion of Slavonic blood; but it is a fact equally well established that the strain of Hellenic blood has been

perpetual, and that the Hellenic element is that which has determined the type of the modern nationality.

Next, the essential continuity of the Hellenic race is signally shown by the evidence of national character viewed in its larger aspects. It is seldom safe to take as national or generic those minor traits which vary almost infinitely in the individual. But nations are often distinguished by broadly-marked tendencies or aptitudes traceable through every period of their history. These may properly be called national characteristics. Originating partly, perhaps, in race, they may yet cease to be, in themselves, proofs of a perpetual strain of blood, since they attach themselves to a certain type of civilization; but the persistency of such broad traits vouches at least for a continuous tradition of those institutions and usages, those ways of thinking and feeling, which give essential unity to an originally composite nationality. Have the modern and the ancient Greeks any such national characteristics in common? They have at least two: first, a marked aptitude for city-life, as distinguished from rural life on the one hand, and on the other from the life of a larger political organism. Closely connected with this aptitude for city-life is the ability which they have always shown in commerce. Secondly, the

Character.

Greeks have at every period of their history been true to the love of mental culture, not merely from a perception that knowledge is power, but also, and more, for the sake of the intellectual and moral pleasure which literature and art bestow.

Language. Lastly, old and new Greece are bound together by language. Latin, in passing into the Romance languages, was more or less disintegrated. Greek was for centuries rude and ungrammatical, but it was always itself and itself alone. Many foreign words thrust themselves into its vocabulary—most of which have now been thrust out; but in the organic matters of structure and syntax Greek has never made a compromise with any foreign language. Briefly its story has been this. About 300 A.D. the spoken Greek language began to diverge from the literary language. But until about 750 A.D. Old Greek was generally understood by the people. Then came the great breach of Hellenic tradition, due chiefly to the Slavonians, and by 900 A.D. classical Greek had probably ceased to be generally understood by the people. Presently, between 1100 and 1200, the people's spoken Greek began to have a popular literature of its own. By the thirteenth century this popular dialect had made such way that it was beginning to be used in polite society and in

literature. This popular Greek of the thirteenth century differed very little from the popular Greek which was in use at the beginning of this century. During the last 80 years, however, the Greek language has been returning more and more to the old classical type. The vocabulary has been largely purged of alien words, Slavonian, Turkish, Italian, Albanian. The grammar, too, has been cleared of many corruptions, dating from the sixth and seventh centuries, when the want of communication between towns narrowed the circle of ideas and gradually barbarized the idiom of the rural districts. This recent regeneration has of course proceeded most rapidly in the literary language, but it has made very great progress in the spoken language too. The chief difference now remaining between Old and Modern Greek is one which exists between old and modern languages generally: the old is synthetic, the modern is analytic. Thus it has been the unique destiny of the Greek language to have had, from prehistoric times down to our own, an unbroken life. Not one link is wanting in this chain which binds the New Greece to the Old.

Summary. To sum up: we have seen that from Alexander's time there were two types of Greek—the half-oriental Greek of Asia and the more genuine Greek of Europe.

From the Roman Conquest in 146 B.C. down to the founding of Constantinople in 330 A.D. the Greek nation is most truly represented by the Greek of Europe. But the change of capital from the Tiber to the Bosporus brought the Empire into closer relations with Asia. During the whole Byzantine period the Greek nationality was mainly represented by the Greeks of Asia, who, like the other subjects of the Empire, called themselves Romans. The Greeks of Europe came to be looked upon as mere provincials. Then the Turkish conquest broke up the Byzantine system, and dispersed the Byzantine aristocracy of birth or learning. The representation of the Greek race goes back from Asia to Europe, and for four hundred years the real core of the Greek nation was the agricultural population of Greece Proper. The Greek Revolution, springing from deep general causes, delivered part of the Greek race from Turkey. Thus, after more than two thousand years there were once more free Greeks, bound to the old Greeks by ties of race, character, and language.

Jew and Greek.

The Greek nationality, like the Jewish nationality, has never been crushed out. But there is a signal difference. The Jew has acclimatized himself to the political atmosphere of every country in which he

has been admitted to equal civic rights. The Greek has never done this. The Greek has never been able to draw his political breath freely under any political system which was not Greek. The Greek has been the loyal subject or the able servant of foreigners, but he has never become, in mind and heart, their fellow-citizen; for to do that would be to strip himself of what he can no more put off than he can put off his skin, the innate distinction of his Hellenic character. This has been so, whether the foreign influence was wielded by Roman or by Ottoman, by Venice or by Russia, by France or by Great Britain; and it will be so to the end.

Scenes at Athens.

The story of this undying Greek nationality is rich with all the colours of the most varied romance. Take one place only—take Athens—and recall for a moment some of the things which Athens has seen since the day when the news came that Philip had conquered at Chæroneia. It is a night in the beginning of March in the year 86 B.C.; the Roman legionaries, with drawn swords, are rushing into Athens, amid shouts and the sound of trumpets, through a great breach in the walls: Sulla's face is turned to the citadel which has so long defied him, and, as the glare of the torches falls on his features, those about him can tell by the expression of

his hard blue eyes that the Roman soldiers are free to deluge the streets of the stubborn town with the blood of its famished defenders. Three centuries roll away, and now again there is a siege at Athens, but this time Athenians are the besiegers; the Athenian citadel is held by northern invaders who have stormed the city, enemies already terrible to the Empire, the Goths: and the brave Athenian who leads his townsmen to victory is an officer in the army of Rome, under whose leadership the Greeks will soon prove that the spirit of Marathon is in them yet. Pass from the third century to the eleventh, and mark a brilliant procession which is moving through the portals of that same Athenian citadel: it is an Emperor of the Romans who is going up to give solemn thanks in the Parthenon, once a pagan temple, now a Christian church, but still, as of old, the House of the Virgin: the walls of its sanctuary, as yet untouched by time, are now bright with gilded paintings of Byzantine Emperors and Saints; and beneath that roof, under which Pericles saw the Athene of Pheidias, Basil II. will dedicate his thank-offering, because the Lord of battles has given him his great victory over the Bulgarians. A few generations more have gone by,—the glory of the Byzantines has fallen, and now

the old shrine of Athene looks down on another goodly sight: the Frankish Duke of Athens is holding a great tournament in the plain of the Cephisus; many a paladin of western chivalry is there, from France and Burgundy, from Sicily and Spain, and the prize of valour will be given by a western Queen of Beauty who would shudder and make the sign of the cross if she heard but the name of that heathen Queen of Beauty who beguiled the good knight Tannhaüser. A brief space more, and again a monarch is mounting to the citadel of Athens, but the Church which crowns it is not his goal: he comes to gaze from its summit on the new realm which Allah has given to the faithful servant of his Prophet; and as the Ottoman conqueror of Constantinople looks out on that wonderful scene, so full of a history which he knows not—on those waters of Salamis where the tide of Asiatic barbarism was rolled back for two thousand years—on the land still rich with the unravaged triumphs of Hellenic art—Mohammed II. turns to the vizier at his side, and says, 'Verily Islam owes much to Omar the son of Turakhan.' Again two hundred years glide past, and the soldiers of Venice have their camp in the old grove of olives hard by the Sacred Way from Eleusis to Athens: they are besieging the

Ottomans who hold the Athenian citadel. It is a September evening, and a cry bursts from them as sudden flames are seen to shoot from the Parthenon into the dark evening sky: a stray bomb from a mortar has exploded among the Turkish stores in the temple, and, at that instant, the most perfect building in the world has been marred for ever. Since that day the spirit of calm loveliness which still dwells with the ruined temple of Athene has looked on many a stirring scene of which men still living can remember the new fame: it has seen Turkish garrisons hold or yield that ancient rock, as their fortune waxed or waned through the long agony of the Greek rebellion: it has seen at last the growing life of a people born again to freedom: but it has never beheld a nobler sight than on that day, only thirty-seven years ago, when the great square of Athens was thronged with the firm but peaceful and truly loyal concourse who came to ask King Otho for that gift without which a people can never be free in more than name.

Revolution of 1843.

The Greeks had enjoyed nominal liberty for eleven years before their Bavarian master gave them a constitution, and they had possessed a nominal constitution for twenty years before they could get it to work. Freedom from an external

yoke is one thing; constitutional freedom is another; without this last the former may mean no more than a change of despots. That fraction of the Greek territory and race which are comprised in the Greek kingdom have been free from Turkey since 1832. But it is only since 1863 that they have been free in the fullest political sense. Greece, as a country in which personal liberty and private property are secured by really effective guarantees, is of the same age as the present reign.

II.

In my first lecture I endeavoured to show how the Greek nationality has had an unbroken life: this evening I shall attempt to give some impressions of a visit to the country, so far as these may serve to illustrate the chief traits of its present aspect and condition.

We left Marseilles in a French steamer on a Saturday afternoon at the beginning of May, 1878, and after a pleasant voyage came on Wednesday afternoon into the beautiful harbour of Syra, with its white town climbing up the steep face of the cliff and looking as it were built of dominoes. One ought to enter Greece by this way round the Morea into the Ægean, and leave it by the other route through Corfu and Brindisi: thus one sees things in the right order: the associations of Western Greece are the more modern. There had been some doubt on board as to whether we should

reach Syra in time for the Austrian Lloyd steamer which was to take us on to the Peiræus: to our relief, there it was in the harbour, getting up steam: but the satisfaction was short-lived: in a few minutes more it had left the harbour without waiting for us. This made it necessary to stay three days at Syra; but the delay had its reward. We resolved to visit Delos, about fifteen miles off, and at five the next morning we started from Syra in a boat which danced before a light breeze; the wind fell as the sun rose above the turquoise-coloured sea, but in about seven hours we were at Delos. The sacred island of the old Ægean is now a bare rock without tree or house, a silent grave of the Hellenic past. From its hill, the Cynthus which gave a name to Apollo, there is a wonderful view of the Cyclades. Delos is the very centre of their inner group. To the east, only a few miles off, we see the bold form of Myconos rising steeply from the sea; there to the south, are Naxos and Paros, pale blue as evening falls, and between them a faint and far-off glimpse of Ios, the isle where the old legend told that Homer lay buried; the long and lofty Tenos to the north, a deep purple—Andros scarcely seen beyond: to the west, the long dark line of Syra. Perfect calm and stillness

Delos.

reigned over all. A distinguished member of the French school of Athens, who was superintending excavations in Delos, most hospitably gave us shelter for the night on the rocky isle of Rheneia close by. We spent the evening in a boat on the glassy sea, when the forms of the Cyclades became still more beautiful under the light of moon and stars; and next day we returned to Syra.

Athens.

Athens is the place which best shows what the Greeks have done since the Turks left, though it is not the best place at which to estimate the general state of the country. Perhaps no city in the world has had such a fate. Apart from its old fame, Athens has a good site for commerce with the Levant, and it might have been expected that, into whatever hands it passed, it would at least always be a town of importance. And so it was for some seventeen hundred years after the loss of Greek independence. But then it came under rulers who cared for commerce as little as for literature or art. Under the Turks Athens was simply a second-rate provincial town in the pashalik of Eubœa.

1832.

The Bishop of Lincoln (Dr. Wordsworth) was at Athens in 1832, and this is his account of it:—

'A few new wooden houses, one or two more solid

structures, and the two lines of planked sheds which form the bazaar, are all the inhabited dwellings that Athens can boast.' It is now a handsome and pros- 1880.
perous city. Athens has a population of 50,000: the Peiræus has a further population of 30,000, and contains some thirty steam-factories. The public buildings which have arisen at Athens within the life-time of a generation show a purity of taste and a happy grace which all foreign visitors recognize. The same may be said of many handsome private houses which have been built or are now rising. This, by the way, is a good sign for Greece. It is becoming more usual for Greek men of wealth, who have made their fortunes abroad, to return and settle at Athens. The whole aspect of Athens is clean and neat. The only partial exception, perhaps, is the Albanian quarter known as Plaka, whence come at night the brayings of many donkeys—nicknamed by sleepless Athenians 'the nightingales of Plaka.' Handsome new boulevards are gradually coming into existence, but it would be too much to hope that the trees will be much more than a pleasure to the eye. From May to August the one thing which Athens craves in vain is shade. The gardens of the Palace indeed are

opened with a graceful liberality to the public, and afford a welcome refuge from the heat. But the groves on the banks of the Ilissus have dwindled sadly since the days when Socrates and Phædrus sought their shelter from the summer noon. Those bowery haunts of the nightingale by the Cephisus which Sophocles celebrates bloom no longer with the golden-eyed crocus and the clustering bells of the narcissus. The destruction of wood in Greece has been due to many causes, some local, some general. One of these causes came vividly before us. In a valley between Helicon and Parnassus we met what might have been taken for a tribe of gipsies—a long train of men, women and children, some on foot, some on horses, with all their household goods. These were shepherds, who were moving up from the Bœotian valley—it was near the end of May—to their summer pastures on the topmost heights of Parnassus. The shepherds in Greece form a separate community, under the rule of a patriarchal chief, and are looked upon by the common people as wealthy. The flocks of goats belonging to these shepherds have had a great deal to do with the disappearance of the woods in Greece, by browsing on the underwood of the uplands. But there has

Destruction of wood.

been something worse than the goats—the recklessness of the country-people themselves, who would allow a whole hill-side to be stripped in lighting a single fire. Athenians still living can remember when the last patches of forest in the glens of Hymettus and Pentelicus blazed around Athens night after night. People at Corfu can tell the same story of the glens in Albania. Then the ravages of war were disastrous to many districts. When the wood had been destroyed, the next thing to go was the water which the trees had screened. In the month of May a person of extremely small athletic powers can jump over the river Asopus. The same thing has happened elsewhere, as in some parts of Italy. In Dante's *Inferno*, Adam of Brescia, the false coiner, is tormented by thirst, and longs for the green hills and cool rivulets of Casentino. Nowadays the once shady margins of those streams of Casentino are as dry as the parched lips of the sufferer. Of course this destruction of wood and drying up of water has in turn injured the climate of Greece by diminishing the rain-fall.

Mode of travelling.

A tour through the provinces of the Greek kingdom is the only satisfactory way of forming any opinion as to the general state of the country. There

is probably no country in Europe of which the condition can be so little judged from its large towns: the tale which these tell is in some points too flattering and in others too harsh. As there are few inns except in the towns on the coast, and as the road-system of Greece is still incomplete, tourists are still under the necessity of employing a dragoman, who provides riding-horses for the travellers, and usually carries a complete canteen, trusting to the villages only for the staple articles of food, eggs, chickens, and bread, sometimes lamb and fruit. Our dragoman, whose Christian name was Miltiades, deserves a portrait by a better artist: he had lived some years in the service of an Englishman, and had certain fixed beliefs, which nothing could disturb, with regard to British usages and the British character; his views of the English language, though limited, had much of the rigid and dogmatic character of the later Greek rhetoric; and when he desired to be particularly emphatic, he used to begin with the stirring exordium, 'My gentlemens, I tell you the truth.' His method of dealing with the natives was sometimes more summary than we could quite approve, but he had the practical merit of generally carrying his point. Under the leadership of Miltiades we generally

started about six in the morning—sometimes earlier—rested about mid-day, for an hour or two, wherever shade and water could be found, and usually finished the day's journey by five or six in the evening, at some village where a room in a cottage could be had for the night. This was our life for several weeks, and it was extremely pleasant. In the Greek climate the heat is not oppressive for moderately strong persons, even in May and June; indeed the only months of the year which appear to be distinctly bad for tourists in Greece are July and August. The earlier spring-months—February to April—are probably the best of all; but the practical advantage of the spring and summer over the late autumn and winter is chiefly this, that, as a rule, it is easier in spring and summer to obtain food in the out-of-the-way villages. The nature of the broken, hilly ground in many places makes it necessary to go at a foot's pace a great part of the way. The little Greek horses are in some points like those from that part of western Ireland which used to be known as 'the stone-wall country'; and the peculiar gift of the Greek horse is much the same. As his Irish brother has the knack of somehow getting over stone walls, so the Greek animal has the art of picking his way without

stumbling through rocky tracks which baffle description—apparently impossible labyrinths of jagged points and smooth surfaces, up ladders worse than any stair of penance, and down places certainly more difficult than the descent to Avernus. If one had to name any one path as more conspicuously bad than another, it would be safe to specify part of the bridle-path between Tegea and Sparta—the very line of the old road along which the courier Pheidippides is said to have gone at such a wonderful pace, when he was sent from Athens to Sparta to ask for help before the battle of Marathon, and performed the distance in forty-eight hours. He certainly well deserved his name, the son of the sparer of horses. If all the roads had been equally bad, we, mounted as we were, should have occupied at least a fortnight in performing that journey. Everyone knows that the common Greek name for the horse is *the irrational*, but the meaning of the name deserves notice. It is simply this: owing to the badness of the roads for the last twelve hundred years, the horse has been less used in Greece for carriage-draught than as a beast of burden; hence he has come to be looked upon as the typical animal, the animal which is most useful all round; and thus he has had specially appropriated

'The irrational.'

to him the generic name of 'irrational,' that is, of animal as distinguished from man.

Since Greece became free much energy and money have been expended on public works. The one thing that still remains to be done is to complete the road-system. At present the roads of the Greek mainland, in the Peloponnesus and north of it, have an aggregate length of about 550 miles: but a very large part of these are of bad quality. This is not the fault of the Greek government. It is simply want of money. The cost of road-making in Greece is enormous. Draw a straight line, or even a curve, between almost any two places of importance in Greece, and you will find that you cannot avoid carrying it over a mountain-range, or at least a tract of stony hills. The average cost of road-making in Greece, taking the hardest and easiest ground together, has been estimated at £600 a mile. As far as the Peloponnesus is concerned, the currant-trade and the silk-trade are the two forces which are pressing Greece to go on with the roads, and are also bringing in some of the money which will help her to do it. No pressure of this kind will come from agriculture, and no help either, until more capital has been put into the land. Roads.

Land-tenure.

The agrarian history of Greece, old and new, supplies some practical illustrations of the evils incident to both the opposite extremes in land-tenure. Under the Roman Empire Greece, like Italy, passed through a phase of vast estates, when land was in a few hands; but here we must not forget the limit to the analogy between these vast estates and similar estates in modern times—namely, that these large estates in ancient Greece and Italy were cultivated mainly by slaves, whose condition can never really be compared with that of free peasants, however much the latter may suffer in special cases. In 1832, at the end of the war, a quantity of land—the endowment of the Turkish military fiefs—reverted to the new Greek government, and was granted in small lots to peasant-holders, subject to taxes on the produce. This was a necessity, since the land-market did not then attract capitalists; and even at it was, much land was perforce left unproductive. The system of small-holdings has ever since been an obstacle to scientific methods of farming, since the average farmer has not been in a condition to attempt or to desire improvement. Agriculture in Greece has made most creditable progress in the last few years; but it is necessary that more capital should be

invested in land, and that the system of small-holdings should be tempered by the creation of a class of land-owners able and anxious to turn the advantages of the soil to full account, before Greek agriculture can become what it might and should be—the foundation and the mainstay of Greek prosperity.

When we left Athens we took the northern provinces first. Our route lay from Athens to Thebes, and then through the wonderful scenery of Mount Helicon and Mount Parnassus to Delphi, near the shores of the Gulf of Corinth. It is a delightful country to travel slowly through, in spring or early summer; it was then about the middle of May, and not at all unpleasantly hot. Day after day, as we came to place after place of old renown, a continual procession of great memories was passing before the mind, while the eye was feasted with a perpetual series of magnificent views. The characteristic of Greek scenery is clearness of contour and fusion of colour,—the union of distinct outlines with delicately blended hues. But who shall describe the outlines of the Greek hills? The best thing that was ever said about them, to my thinking, was said by Thackeray—a true artist, with a true instinct for all the beautiful

Greek scenery.

things of Greece, in spite of those dismal recollections of Greek grammar at school that haunted him when he was at Athens, and imagined the Greek Muse appearing to him in the awful form of a stern and patronizing preceptress. He speaks of the Attic plain as surrounded by 'a chorus of hills.' It is an image full of truth. The forms of these Greek hills are at once so bold and so chastened, the onward sweep of their ranges is at once so elastic and so calm, each member of every group is at once so individual and so finely helpful to the ethereal expressiveness of the rest, that the harmony of their undulations and the cadences in which they fall combine the charm of sculpture with the life and variety of a sun-lit sea, leading one's thoughts away from the Hebrew image of the hills that stand around Jerusalem, and irresistibly suggesting the Hellenic image of a choral sisterhood, marshalled by the great master of the scene to chant a sublime antiphone of praise and thanksgiving for the goodliness of that wonderful land. There are subtle analogies between form and sound which can hardly be expressed in words, but which are more expressive than any words to those who have felt them. If I should attempt to describe the peculiar impression

which the scenery of Greece has left on my memory, I should transfer to Greece those words which Byron applies to the intellectual beauty of Zuleika,—'the mind, the music breathing from her face.'

View from Cithæron.

There is a glorious view from the head of the pass over Mount Cithæron, as one goes northward out of Attica. The pass is a noble gorge whose steep sides are clad on the left hand with pine, on the right with fir; and at a turn of the road the whole plain of Bœotia bursts upon the sight, stretched out far below us. There to the north-west soars up the Helicon, and beyond it, Parnassus; and, though this is the middle of May, their higher cliffs are still crowned with dazzling snow. Just opposite, nearly due north, is Thebes, on a low eminence with a range of hills behind it, and the waters of Lake Copais to the north-west, gleaming in the afternoon sun. That mountain whose bold crest rises in the north-east is Mount Delphi in Eubœa. The whole wide view has a wonderful sunshiny clearness. The sharply defined profile of the wavy or soaring hills is a framework within which the brightest and the most delicate colours are blended, from the dazzling snow seen in strong relief against the deep azure of the sky, to the dark patches of brown and green in the plain at our feet.

As we look over that plain, how many famous places can be seen at once! There, on our left, near the foot of snowy Helicon, is the old site of the brave little town, Thespiæ, whose sons stood with the Athenians at Marathon and fell with the Spartans at Thermopylæ. There, close to it, you can see a mound or hillock breaking the level surface of the plain: that is the sepulchral mound which marks the battlefield of Leuctra, where Epameinondas and his Theban phalanx dealt the death-blow to the power of Sparta. Here, just below us, near the point where our zig-zag road will presently bring us out on the plain, is the site of Platæa, separated by some nine miles from its deadly enemy Thebes, on the other side of the valley, and nestling as for shelter under Mount Cithæron, near the pathway to its best friend, Athens. There, on the right, is the spot where Tanagra stood; and one can trace at least the bed of the Asopus—the stream is in these summer days a thread hardly to be seen from so high up—winding along among fruit trees and vines, fields of barley, and pastures where cows and sheep are grazing. The day happened to be extraordinarily clear, even for Greece; and once, just for a moment, we caught a strange gleam in the northern sky, very far off—it could barely be seen—it was something that

flashed like the point of a silver spear. Our guide exclaimed—'Look! Mount Olympus!'

This is one of the characteristics of travel in Greece —this sudden seeing of distant things that you never supposed from the map that you could possibly see. I well remember one evening, near the end of our ride, when we were coming to a village not far from Leuctra. To the south the massive wall of Cithæron stood up dark against the purple sky. In front of us, to the west, and very near now, that is Helicon—a great buttress in front—and behind it, on our right hand, a lower ridge, now undulating, now serrated like a battlement; behind this, again, far-off Parnassus, snow-crowned, blue. But cease to look straight in front of you towards the sunset in the west: look a little to your left: there is an opening there between Cithæron and Helicon. What can be that very lofty distant mountain that we see between them? We turned to our guide and asked him; he answered, 'Ziria.' Ziria is the modern name of Mount Cyllene in Arcadia. Here we were in Bœotia, between Cithæron and Helicon, and we could see a range which is in the heart of Arcadia! Sometimes the surprise is the other way. Mount Ithomê, in the centre of the Messenian plain, is nearly 2,500 feet high, and you have a very ex- A surprise.

tensive and beautiful view from the top of it: you see an amphitheatre of hills sweeping round from a blue point of sea to the snowy cliffs of Taygetos in the east, and at the mid-point of the crescent you see Eira, the hiding-place of Aristomenes, as the Greek monk called it when he pointed to that lofty hill: but from the top you cannot see those very heights which you do see from the flat level in Bœotia—you cannot see Cyllene in Arcadia.

'The Branching Roads.'

Never shall I forget the day when we went from Livadia along the lower slopes of the Parnassus range. We had now left Daulia behind us, Daulia, the first home of the nightingale, as the old Greeks fabled—a bowery place, with its pomegranates and orchards and almond trees and olives. Now we were in the country that the primeval story made the scene of a dark and horrible deed; the story which Sophocles has made immortal in *Œdipus the King*. Œdipus was coming back from the place to which we were then going—Delphi; he had gone thither to solve a dark doubt—whether he was indeed the true son of the King and Queen of Corinth; and the oracle had given him an answer darker than his own doubt, that he was yet fated to slay his father. Who that father was, the god

said not. Then, as he took his way from Delphi with gloomy thoughts, Œdipus came to a place where three roads met. Here he encountered a lordly man, whom he knew not, borne in a chariot; and one of the proud man's servants jostled the poor wayfarer Œdipus out of the path; but there was proud blood in Œdipus also, whencesoever it came; he turned on the insolent lord and slew him,—not knowing then, nor yet to know till worse had come, that the slain man was his own father, Laius, the King of Thebes. It is a thrilling moment even now, when one comes to the place where those three roads meet. A bare isolated hillock of grey stone stands at the point where our path from Daulia meets the road to Delphi, and a third road that stretches to the south. There, in front, we are looking up the road down which Œdipus came; we are moving in the steps of the man whom he met and slew; the road runs up a wild and frowning pass between Parnassus on the right hand and on the left the spurs of the Helicon range, which here approach it. Away to the south a wild and lonely valley opens, running up among the desolate places of Helicon, a vista of naked cliffs or slopes clothed with scanty herbage, a scene of inexpressible grandeur and desolation. Strangely enough this weird spot has

had its story renewed in our own time. That grey hillock of stone at the meeting of the three roads marks the point where travellers long ago saw the legendary grave of the king and father whom Œdipus slew; and now that hillock bears a monument of no mythical horror — that oblong stone on its summit is the tomb of a brigand chief, once the scourge of the country-side, who was killed some twenty-five years ago at this place where the three roads meet.

Brigandage.

Everyone asks, does brigandage still exist in Greece? This is like asking, does scarlatina still exist? Brigandage is an acute symptom of social disease. No doubt its causes are a good deal more preventable than those of scarlatina; but, like scarlatina, it may always recur when things reach a certain point. So far as we saw or could learn, there was not then any danger from brigands in Greece; and we were there soon after the rising in Thessaly had been stopped,—chiefly through the influence of the English Government. At such a time, if ever, the roads from the north might have been expected to be insecure. The causes which generate brigandage have ceased to be active in Greece, and brigandage will reappear only when they revive,—that is, one may reasonably hope, never. The state of Greece in this respect offers a

favourable contrast with the actual state of districts in Italy and Sicily.*

The northern part of our route ended at Delphi. Delphi. Delphi is on the side of Mount Parnassus, where the deep ravine between it and Helicon opens on a rich plain, with the blue waters of the Corinthian Gulf beyond. In the tremendous face of Parnassus there is a mighty cleft. Approach it, and on the right hand you will find traces of an ancient chamber, which was once fitted with stone basins for ablution. There it was that the pilgrims to this oracle of old put away their uncleanness with holy washing, that so they might pass pure through those portals of rock into the awful shrine beyond, where they should question Apollo concerning the secret things of good and evil, of life and death, until the voice of the holy priestess gave them answer, coming forth from among the dense wreaths of vapour and incense that half veiled from their eyes her tossed arms and palpitating form, as the power of the god came upon her, and words not her own were rolled through her pale lips,

* And, we may now add, European Turkey. The chief of the brigands who recently took an English officer near Salonica is a Wallach, and his band was partly composed of Hodouts, *i.e.*, Albanian irregulars who had been discharged, or who had deserted.

while the clash of a god's armour was heard from an unknown place, and the garlands of laurel were shaken. At Delphi one has a feeling deeper than can be moved by historical association alone, or even by natural beauty: this spot was once in very truth what poetry called it, the mid-point of the earth—the focus to which all passions of the human heart were drawn by the intense craving to read futurity—the centre from which those passions were hurled back upon the life of man, strengthened, or shattered. What hopes have passed through those rocky gates of the oracle at Delphi, and what despair has come forth of them; what anguish has entered, and what rapture had returned; how many knaves and fools have tried there to take Heaven into partnership with their folly or fraud, how many good men have had a noble enterprise cheered or blasted, how many kingdoms have had their destinies changed, how many triflers have been humoured, how many wise men have been set for a life-time to solve riddles that had no answer, within that terrible sanctuary of Delphi! Æschylus has struck the true note for Delphi when, in the opening scene of the *Furies*, he puts this prayer into the mouth of the priestess ere she passes to the inner shrine:—

First of the powers oracular I hail
Earth's primal inspiration ; Themis next,
To whom, grey legend whispers, Earth bequeathed
This lineal throne of prescience ; after whom,
Sanctioned by Themis and by none withstood,
Once more a Titaness inherited,—
Phœbe,—and gave this throne a natal gift
To him who bears her modulated name.
* * * * * * * * *
Then Zeus put divination in his heart,
Set him, fourth seer and latest, on the throne
And speaks for ever in his oracles.

That is just what one feels at Delphi. It is not merely Hellenic; it is a great natural sanctuary of primeval man, a place marked for the abode of that mystery and dread with which a faith rooted in fear surrounds the Divine power, before a gentler religion comes, and the clouds break before the sunshine—such sunshine as the Greek fancy threw around the form of Apollo, as he rose in music on a dark background of elder deities now sinking to chaos and night.

Traits of Greek life and character.

In a leisurely journey through the Greek provinces one cannot fail to get glimpses of the people's life which tell more about the real state of the country than many blue-books. Facts and figures are but dead things to these hints. Once, when we came to an Arcadian village in the evening, our host,

the head of the cottage household, said to our dragoman's servant, Petros, εἶσθε νυμφευμένος; to which Petros promptly answered, ὄχι: 'Are you married?' 'No.' As soon as this emphatic negative was heard, there was a perceptible increase of cordiality towards Petros. Miltiades afterwards told us that the question put to Petros was frequently put to men of his class when they appeared in strange villages, and that unmarried men were usually the best received. The cause which makes rural Greece such a paradise of bachelors is a simple one—their rarity. The Greeks are an essentially domestic people, and the population in the provinces is thin: it was computed not long ago at about 58 to the square mile. A man of the agricultural class generally marries as soon as he can. In Greece, as elsewhere, marriage in the humbler ranks is generally arranged between the parents and the bridegroom; the bride has not much to say in the matter. The parents seek a young man of good character who has laid by 3000 or 4000 francs; and, according to the prevalent tariff of matrimonial exchange,—eligible husbands being at a premium,—such a youth may reasonably expect a dower of quite six

times that amount. It is also the custom that the parents of the bride should provide nearly all the furniture for the young couple's house.

All competent observers agree in bearing testimony to the good moral character of the agricultural population in Greece. They work hard and live hardly; a labouring man will breakfast at four in the morning on a little bread and garlic, washed down with a glass of *retinîtes*—the thin ordinary wine of the country, preserved with resin, which gives it a strong flavour of sealing-wax; and then he will work in the fields till seven or eight at night, with only one repetition, perhaps, of the meal just described. Drunkenness is almost unknown in Greece, and this is no doubt one of the reasons why insanity is so rare. At Salona Scala, on the Gulf of Corinth, where we had to wait for a boat, there was a poor crazy fellow in the verandah before the inn, twanging a *bouzuki*—a sort of guitar with one string—and singing some songs of his own making. It was curious to see how the people who were loitering at the door of the inn behaved to him: there was no jeering or attempt to make fun of him, as may too often be seen in other countries. One of them said to us, by way of explaining the state of

things,—not, he is mad, or he is an idiot—but 'he is afflicted in mind,'—and this was said gravely, in a low tone, as if to bespeak sympathy for the poor creature. There are only two lunatic asylums in Greece; the chief one is at Corfu.

Greek family life has a decidedly patriarchal tone—partly a legacy from the ancient clan-system, but more directly due to the very great importance of family discipline and cohesion during those ages when the Greeks were an oppressed and friendless race. One sees the same thing among the Jews, only that there, of course, much more is due to the strong and definite traditions of the Jewish law. In the case of the Greeks the patriarchal tone is strengthened by what may be called the patriarchal sentiment of the Greek church. Once we breakfasted in a cottage on the little island of Rheneia close to Delos. Our host was an old man who might have carried in the Greek War that rusty gun which hangs against the cottage wall. He sat cross-legged, smoking his pipe: his wife brought us milk, coffee, and a sort of cream-cheese. Their son-in-law was there, a boatman from the neighbouring island of Siphnos; and presently his wife, the daughter of the old couple, came in, and sat down, looking at us with

her large dark eyes widely opened. The old man and his wife talked to us, and their son-in-law replied to the questions that were asked about his children; the young mother smiled brightly when the children were mentioned, but never spoke. This silence had the air of custom rather than shyness; she was evidently the pride of the island cottage, and was the only one of the family who wore shoes. It seems that it is a rule of etiquette in Greek households of the humbler sort that, in the presence of strangers, no woman shall speak except the mistress of the house. On another occasion we were kindly received by a very pleasant young couple in a village of one of the valleys between Helicon and Parnassus. They had three children, a boy of seven, named Athanasius; a little girl of five, named Elia,—but the third, a sturdy boy about a year old, had, we found, no name as yet: the father said that he was considering the question. This is a curious vestige of patriarchalism which has the sanction of the Greek Church. The name need not be given to the child at baptism: the choice of the name is the special prerogative of the father, and he is allowed to keep this state-secret *in petto* as long as he pleases.

On the day when we left Sparta to go northward up the valley of the Eurotas, we met the country-people coming in to the *bazari*, the market, at Sparta. The women were walking, as a rule, while the husband or father followed on horseback—often with children perched on the saddle in front of them, or encircled by each arm. This arrangement is characteristic of the southern Morea. For many centuries the civilization of the Peloponnesus was lower than that of Northern Greece. This has left a sure mark behind: among the country people, the position of women in the Peloponnesus is visibly lower than it is elsewhere in Greece. In Arcadia, particularly, one cannot help noticing the tendency to throw too much of the hard out-of-door work upon women. This tendency is the more significant in regard to the history of the Morea as it is completely foreign to the normal Greek character. The Greek feeling for the sacredness of family life, and also the intellectual refinement which belongs to the national character, renders the average Greek naturally courteous and chivalrous towards women of every rank.

Greece is by constitution a democratic country. The Byzantine aristocracy was broken up at the Turkish conquest, and there is now no order of

nobility in Greece. But it is a complete mistake to represent the common people in Greece as ignoring the differences of education or breeding. The Greek has usually a great deal too much tact to behave in such a manner. The real difference between an average Greek of this class and a man of the same class in most other countries is that, with the Greek, social perceptions come by instinct rather than by training. A Greek of the lower orders is usually self-possessed in manner, but it is the self-possession of a child; he is not obtrusive; only everything in the nature of a discussion interests him keenly. Naturally, then, travellers in Greece find more than the usual possibilities of companionship in such a case, though the Greek—be his condition what it may—no more thrusts his company on the stranger than he repels it. In fact, it would not be too much to say of him—

> His honour,
> Clock to itself, knew the true moment when
> Exception bade him speak.

The manners of the Greek common people to each other are habitually more courteous than is the case in most other countries. As we wound in single and

straggling file along the narrow paths, it would often happen that one of the Greeks would call out something which another did not hear, and then the formula invariably was, ὅρισθε, τί λέγετε; '*If you please*, what do you say?' It is interesting to watch a bargain being made between two Greeks. The process is not dramatic, as in Italy, or rhetorical, as in Ireland; it is a display of dialectical fence. I have agreeable recollections of at least one pause which it gave us in a long ride. As we were entering the valleys of Helicon, we came to a place of quaint and homely charm—a hamlet in a green nook under slopes of grey stone—the place once called Ascra, where the poet Hesiod put the points of good husbandry into verse for the Bœotian farmers, and bade them know the lucky days and the unlucky, and do justly, because there is a life after death. Hesiod was not charmed with Ascra, but it looks a pleasant spot now, the home where he sang and grumbled. We halted there under a large pear-tree, while Miltiades haggled with the natives for eggs; and there was time to note how thriving the place looked, with its clumps of mulberry trees and poplars, its patches of ground preparing for cotton, and fields of barley and potatoes which would have rejoiced Hesiod's soul;

Ascra.

while above the cup-like hollow in which the hamlet nestles, the steep grey crags of Helicon rise in a double line of ramparts, with dark pine-wood on the upper heights. Miltiades was eventually baffled in his negotiations by the townsmen of Hesiod; but in justice to his diplomatic skill it is only fair to mention another occasion. We arrived at a village near Tripolitza, in the Morea, one evening, and did not know where to look for a lodging. After some enquiries Miltiades knocked at the door of a cottage. The head of the family, a farmer, was still in the fields —it was about half-past seven on a summer evening —and the farmer's wife naturally demurred to admitting Miltiades and his party. The dialogue that ensued is worthy of record. Miltiades, finding that persuasion failed, boldly but gravely asserted that one of the party was 'an official person' (ἐπίσημος ἄνθρωπος). The Greek word for 'official' is of vague and alarming import in the Greek provinces. The hostess replied, 'What sort of official?' (ποῖος ἐπίσημος;) Miltiades, unabashed, made answer by uttering the long and solemn word καθηγητής: 'A Professor.' This species of official was evidently a new terror in those parts. Opposition quailed. Miltiades had a keen eye for signals of distress, but,

like a true Greek, he used his diplomatic advantage with dignified moderation; and the garrison would have surrendered at discretion, if the master of the house had not come back from the fields just then and given us a hospitable welcome.

From Delphi to Corinth.

The second part of our journey was through the Peloponnesus. At Salona Scala, the port of Delphi, we ought to have caught a steamer, but there had been an accident, and, after waiting a day and a half, we took an open boat, and got to Corinth after a very rough but enjoyable sail of eight hours. I have seldom seen a finer sunset than on that evening in the Gulf of Corinth; the western sun, gleaming through stormy clouds, threw a purple light, broken by shadow, on Delphi and on the cliffs of Parnassus about it; our boat was dashing on through a deep blue sea which was rapidly whitening with foam; far away to the west the shores of the Corinthian gulf stretched in clear azure outlines,—narrowing to meet each other at the opposite promontories which stand as portals between the inner and outer waters. This was not Byron's sunset—it was not one unclouded blaze of living light: but as one looked at the grand hills around Delphi, one felt that the blending of sunshine and storm was

best for the last look. It was about ten at night when we got to Corinth, and I remember a Greek passenger who was with us saying that he could tell by the sound of some Greek voices on the shore, as our boat came near in the dark, that the speakers were from Salona, the place we had left. The mainland of the Greek Kingdom is only about two-thirds of the size of Scotland,—but it is large enough to have very many local varieties of rustic accent and idiom in the vernacular. Now, as of old, the intersecting chains of hills keep the towns very much apart, fostering local differences and local feelings.

The Acro-Corinthus.

One could not see the physical character of Greece better than from the top of the Acro-Corinthus, the old citadel of Corinth, about 1880 feet above the sea. The view is by no means the finest in Greece, but it is certainly one of the most instructive. It brings together all the typical features of the landscape—hills, bays, islands: and it shows in a small compass the distinctive physical formation of the whole peninsula. This view from the Acro-Corinth is like a map showing a strip of Northern Greece and a strip of Southern for purposes of comparison. The great feature of the whole is that the breaking up of the land by hills and sea is

repeated on a smaller and smaller scale, with finer and finer articulation, as we pass from north to south.

Mycenæ. At Mycenæ it was our good fortune to find the distinguished archæologist, Mr. Stamatakes, whom the Greek Government had appointed to continue the excavations at Mycenæ which Dr. Schliemann had left unfinished. Mr. Stamatakes was then employing 25 workmen, all picked men. The graves which Dr. Schliemann found at Mycenæ lie in a precinct of oval form on the side of the acropolis of Mycenæ, and within the Gate of Lions—close to the road which leads from that gate to the top of the low hill. On the top of the hill are the foundations of an ancient house. Schliemann's theory is that the graves of the oval precinct were the graves of Agamemnon and his dynasty, and that the house on the top of the hill was the house in which these same people lived. Mr. Stamatakes believes, and it is difficult to doubt, that the graves in the oval precinct are far older than the age at which this hill of Mycenæ became the seat of a Greek dynasty. Greek princes would not have buried their dead so close to their dwelling-house. The burial-places used by the dynasty whose house can be traced on the top of the hill were more probably the domed buildings outside the Gate of Lions—the

larger of which buildings is popularly called 'The Treasury of Atreus.' Mr. Stamatakes was further of the decided opinion that the substructions of the house on the hill-top are not Hellenic in character. At that time—May, 1878—Dr. Schliemann's veritable Agamemnon was the guest of Mr. Stamatakes. Agamemnon was kept in a wooden box on the ground floor of Mr. Stamatakes' house at Mycenae, and we saw him there. The head was crushed in upon the breast, as if the coffin had been too short, and the mouth was twisted; but the teeth were in excellent condition. He was then in a state critically near to evaporation: but his name will live. The new hotel at Nauplia, hard by, is the 'Agamemnon.'

If Greece is pre-eminently a country in which Nature has moulded man's fate by the physical form of his home, it is also the land where she delights in a certain irony of contrast between the home and the man. Attica, with its thin soil and cold grey limestone, became the seat of a fertile and genial art, of a luxuriant imagination, of a bright and mirth-loving people. The stern and rigid genius of military Sparta was cradled in a valley of the softest and richest beauty,—a valley where the pink flowers of the oleander and the blossom of the yellow thorn mingle with the

Valley of the Eurotas.

foliage of poplars and evergreen oaks on the banks of the Eurotas, winding among fields of barley, olive-groves and mulberry trees, vines and currants. Strange revenge of fate: the first thing that one sees as one comes into modern Sparta—Sparta, that old home of iron war, that foe of every new-fangled device—is a steam-manufactory of silk. A Spartan put his head out of the window as we rode by, and politely asked us to come in and see the works. The whole valley of the Eurotas is given up to mulberry plantations for the silk-worm. All the way from the bridge over the Eurotas to Sparta—about five miles—you see a number of small round green mounds or hillocks, most of them terraced with ledges, for feeding the silk-worms, which are reared chiefly on a sort of heather. Sparta and Kalamata are the chief seats of the silk-trade. In spite of the silk-trade, however, it is still three days' post from Athens to Sparta, and a nine hours' ride from Sparta to the sea at Marathonisi. Modern Sparta is a little town of white and brown houses, with a church on rising ground, and trees dotted about,—a straggling place, close under the great cliffs of Taygetos. The site of old Sparta is just north of the new town, among olives and barley fields; there is nothing to be seen

Sparta.

but the traces of the old theatre, in a large hollow scooped out of the side of a hill, and the ruins of a small building of much later date, absurdly called 'the tomb of Leonidas.'

The Arcadian border.

But Sparta needs no relics in stone: the site speaks for itself. Its full grandeur is seen if you approach from Arcadia. We left the south border of Arcadia at half-past four in the morning of the last day of May. It was starlight in the clear sky, but the light of dawn was growing. The many-folded mountains that enclose the plain of Tripolitza showed varying shades of deep purple; only their western heights were beginning to catch the rays of the rising sun, which had not yet appeared above the eastern hills. Farther north the inner plain of Mantineia was seen, its hills robed in a paler blue. For hours we rode southward through the dry bed of a torrent called the Saranda Potamo, because it winds so much that a straight line would cross it some forty times.

Taygetos

Just before eight o'clock we suddenly saw a brilliant flash, like the sparkle of a diamond, intensely radiant against the cloudless blue sky, above the bleak, brown hill in front. It was the highest point of Taygetos — the mighty mountain range above Sparta. Twice again in the next two hours

that apparition came—the silver flash; and then, the third time, a larger vision was revealed—a mighty mass, towering up like a wall built by giants, and from its middle line throwing out a huge black buttress to the plain, while its topmost ramparts shine afar off through the clear air with the dazzling glory of snow. By half-past two we were on the ridge which is the northern border of the Spartan valley, and the whole range of Taygetos was extended before us: beginning in a low line to the south-west, then rising into that great battlemented crest which we had seen far off, then dipping again at a great cleft in the chain, then springing up once more to stretch away in bold heights to the north-west,—a sight never to be forgotten, a range of marvellous grandeur, stretching from distant sea to distant cliff for a line of seventy miles.

Any one who has ever spent a night at the Great St. Bernard Alp knows how naturally and gracefully hospitality connects itself with the life of a monastery. It is so in the Greek Church too. Next to the monasteries of Mount Athos, the Holy Mountain, hardly any Greek monastery has a finer situation than that which is placed on the side of Mount

Ithomê.

Ithomê. Ithomê stands in the centre of the Messenian plain—a great natural citadel, about 2,470 feet high, that is, more than four times as high as the Acropolis of Athens, which it strongly resembles in form, and a good deal higher than the Acro-Corinthus. On the top of Ithomê there is a little church in which the Byzantine paintings are still fresh, and close to it a cell in which an old monk lives alone and serves the church. I noticed a block of white marble set in the rough masonry over the door, with the words in Greek, 'Blessed is the dweller here, if he hath a good patience; for so he follows the ensample of our Good Master. May 8, 1757.' The spirit of ascetic solitude which breathes in the words harmonizes well with the lonely summit. As one looks down on the Messenian plain—an undulating expanse of green, with dark patches of orchards, and dotted with villages—one sees to the westward a line of grey wall, with the ruins of towers at intervals, winding over the fields. Those are the remains of the massive walls begun by Epameinondas, and meant to make Messenê safe for ever from her deadly foe beyond those snow-crowned ramparts to the east. Neither Greek nor Roman ever took those walls, but at last they were stormed by Alaric and his Goths.

There are only about twenty monks in the monastery of Ithomê, some of them very young. Novices are admitted as early as fifteen; on the other hand the Superior told us that he was thirty-three when he first entered the monastic life. The brethren's hours are chiefly divided between out-door occupations and devotional exercises. The first service is at dawn, the last at midnight, and there are five others between. A noble parting-view of Ithomê is enjoyed by any one who seeks out a temple of Apollo, high up among the wooded hills, on the border between Messenia and Elis. The place was once called Bassæ, 'The Glens.' In this wild spot, two and twenty centuries ago, a neighbouring town, delivered from a pestilence, raised its thank-offering to the Healer. After threading many an upland glen the traveller suddenly sees the columns of a beautiful temple rise up before him in a grey nook—a temple to which solitude and time have been tender; and then if he looks back from this shrine of Apollo, guarded as by some strange spell in the secret recesses of the hills, he descries Ithomê rising far off below him in the centre of the Messenian plain, and sees how truly it is the natural acropolis of the land.

Temple at Bassæ.

We were lucky in the moment of our arrival at Olympia. It was the day before the German excavators were to close their third campaign of nine months, and render an account to the Greek inspector on the spot. We were most kindly received by Dr. Treu, to whom we brought letters. He forthwith put us on ponies, and took us on a little tour of the excavations. The valley of Olympia lies nearly east and west, and is about three miles long by one broad. The Alpheus runs through it, and a smaller stream, the Cladeus, flows into the Alpheus through an opening in the north side of the valley. In the angle between the Alpheus and the Cladeus a cluster of splendid temples once stood. The Germans have laid bare the foundations of these—the temples of Zeus, Hera, and the Mother of the Gods: also a large square enclosure, a sort of sacred court—the *peribolos*—and the sacred treasuries. When one looked down from the village on the hill where the Germans had their quarters, the excavations had the effect of a clear ground-plan of the sacred precinct. Some famous statues that had been found in or near the temples were then lying in a little wooden shed by the Cladeus. The exquisite fragment of the flying Victory was there—a work of Pæonius,—and the

Olympia.

splendid Hermes of Praxiteles, the only extant work of that master, who represents the second period of matured Attic sculpture—that school of softer finish which succeeded to the bolder and grander inspirations of Pheidias. The valley itself is very lovely. The wooded hills which enclose it, low, but of exquisite outline, suggest that nature meant the place to be a choice and secluded scene of holy festival. One thinks of the time when temples stood there in the glory of marble, and gold, and brilliant colours,—when those statues were perfect,—when that plain could show, besides, all living glories of the human form,—when the blue line of those far-off snow-streaked heights in Arcadia met the eyes of the swift runner in the foot-race, and when, as evening closed some day of brilliant rivalries, in Pindar's words, 'the lovely light of the fair-faced moon beamed forth, and all the holy place resounded with festal joy.'

From Olympia to Patras—from the silent and deserted haunt of all that made old Greece strong and beautiful, back to the work-a-day world of modern commerce. Yet it is well that a tour in Greece should end here—that one should look out on Ithaca, bathed in the soft blue haze of sunset on the Ionian sea, a very dream of the Odyssey, and then

turn one's eyes to that busy town and harbour of Patras close at hand. It is in such busy places as these that Greece is fitting itself to take its due rank once more among the nations.

Present position of Greece.

It is your rule to exclude politics here, and I shall not infringe it. The Greek question has one aspect in which it happens to touch the politics of the hour, but it has also another, a larger and higher aspect, in which it rises clear of them. With regard to the general position and prospects of Greece, there are two things which would perhaps be generally admitted by persons of sober judgment, who have endeavoured to look fairly and dispassionately at the facts of the case. First, Greece has made creditable progress during the last fifty years; during the last fifteen years it has made progress which may well be called remarkable, and which, notwithstanding deficiencies that remain, offers a solid ground of confidence in the future of Greece and the Greek nation. Every one admits now that it was a mistake to make the Greek kingdom so small, and to give it such a frontier—a frontier which leaves out such a place as Janina for instance, so long the very centre of Greek life, during a period when Athens was a second-rate provincial town.

Then the country started with a heavy debt for a loan of which less than one-fifth was applied to the purposes for which it was raised. Further, it is only since the beginning of the present reign that Greece has had a truly effective constitution. All these causes have kept the country poor. Want of capital has impeded agriculture and public works. Greece has universal suffrage, and civil servants are removable on a change of ministry. Thus there has been a general dearth of secure careers for able men. The liberal professions have been overstocked. Greece has had too many politicians and too many political journalists. In this last respect things are mending. More openings for educated energy are being made by the development of manufacture and commerce. Greece must not be judged by particular moments of trouble and depression. Other countries besides Greece have such moments now and then. We must judge Greece by its general position and prosperity, as compared with the state of things from which it started. It had to create for itself the first elements of civilization. Europe set Greece to make bricks without straw. Consider fairly what Greece has done, and you will not condemn or despise it; you will respect and esteem it, you will find it

worthy of sympathy and encouragement—yes, and worthy of admiration.

Prospects of Greece.

Secondly, the Greek race offers, on the whole, the best hope of settled order, of constitutional government and of high civilization in those countries which were once Hellenic. This may be said without any undue disparagement of its competitors. Let us concede everything that can be advanced in favour of Muscovite or Ottoman rule by the admirers of either. At least it cannot be said that either Russia or Turkey represents those blessings which subjects of the British monarchy have learned to associate with the name of constitutional freedom, and which they believe to be inseparable from the highest and most beneficent form of civilization. The Greeks have won constitutional freedom by patient effort, and have proved that they can use it. As regards the new principalities, the type of nationality and civilization which they represent is, speaking broadly, the Slavonic. Now the efficacy of Greek civilization, as compared with Slavonic, has once already been tested on a large scale and with a definite result. In the middle of the ninth century the Slavs had a numerical majority in Greece, though, as Carl Hopf has finally demonstrated, and as all learned students of the

question are now agreed, the strain of Hellenic blood was never at any time lost in Greece. What happened? In two hundred years the Greek minority absorbed and Hellenized the Slavs among whom they lived. How was that done? By the superiority —intellectual, political, social—of Greek civilization. If we are sincere in believing that constitutional freedom and the diffusion of sound education are good things, then we must desire to see the influence of the Greek race extended and strengthened in South-eastern Europe.

It was on the heights above Mycenæ that the beacon-fire of Ida found the goal of its race from conquered Troy. Close by is the fair town of Nauplia, the earliest capital of New Greece, where in our own time another beacon-fire finished its course, the sign sent on from West to East, which touched point after point with flame, until at last it reached the land from which it had first shone of old, and kindled comfort for a people who sat in darkness. The light which returned as freedom had gone forth as knowledge; long ago Greece had lifted her own signal to the West, the star which guided the dim search for truth, the star which still shines above the troubles of our life with

a ray so clear and so serene. All men can unite in hoping that Greece may yet again become a source of illumination and of temperate strength for those neighbouring countries which were once Hellenic, but which have long been the abodes of barbarism, ignorance, and violence—that a torch lit by Greece may yet flash through them with a message bringing the reverence for law, the love of ordered liberty, the will to work for the common good, the desire to rise from the aims of individual ambition to those which contemplate the advancement of mankind.

THE PROGRESS OF GREECE.

'A STRUGGLE, equal in duration to the war which Homer sung, and in individual valour not perhaps inferior, has at last drawn to a glorious close; and Greece, though her future destiny be as yet obscure, has emerged from the trial regenerate and free. Like the star of Merope, all sad and lustreless, her darkness has at length disappeared, and her European sisters haste to greet the returning brightness of the beautiful and long-lost Pleiad.' These are the closing words of a book which, since the appearance of Finlay's work, has probably had few English readers, Emerson's *History of Modern Greece.* When they were written in 1830 Capodistria was still President of the new State, and three years were yet to pass before King Otho should arrive at Nauplia.

During the half-century which has nearly elapsed since then, 'the European sisters' have not always

been so gracious to 'the long-lost Pleiad'; indeed they have sometimes been on the verge of hinting that the constellation which they adorn would have been nearly as brilliant without her. But at least there can no longer be any excuse for alleging that Greece has been a failure without examining the facts. Her record is before the world. The last few years have been especially fertile in works replete with information on the political, social, and economic condition of the country.

Among these may be mentioned the work of M. Moraitinis, *La Grèce telle qu'elle est;* the work of M. Mansolas, *La Grèce à l'Exposition Universelle de Paris en* 1878; the essay of M. Tombasis, *La Grèce sous le point de vue agricole;* and an interesting little book, full of information and of acute criticism, by Mr. Tuckerman, formerly Minister of the United States at Athens, *The Greeks of To-day.* It is often instructive to compare Mr. Tuckerman's observations with those made more than twenty years ago by his countryman, Mr. H. M. Baird, who, after residing for a year at Athens and travelling both in Northern Greece and in the Morea, embodied the results in his *Modern Greece.* Lastly, Mr. Lewis Sergeant, in his *New Greece,* has essayed a double

task—to show statistically how far Greece has advanced, and to show historically why it has advanced no further. Mr. Sergeant's book cannot fail to do good service in making the broad facts concerning Greece better known to the British public.

In the following pages only a few of the salient points in the condition of modern Greece can be noticed. The facts and views presented here are derived both from study and from personal observation. They are offered merely in the hope that some readers may be induced to seek fuller sources of knowledge regarding a people who, by general consent, are destined to play a part of increasing importance in the East.

Agriculture. The prosperity of Greece must always depend mainly on agriculture. No question is more vital for Greece at this moment than that of recognising the causes which have checked progress in this direction, and doing what can be done to remove them. It was with agriculture as with every other form of national effort in the newly established kingdom: it had to begin almost at the beginning. The Turks had left the land a wilderness. The Egyptian troops in the Peloponnesus, after burning the olives and other inflammable trees, had cut down those which,

like the fig-tree could less easily be destroyed by fire. The Greek peasantry was too poor and too wretched to aim at more than a bare subsistence by the rudest methods of husbandry. It should never be forgotten in estimating what Greece has done in this department, as in others during the last forty years, that in the earlier part of this period progress was necessarily very slow. The first workers had to construct everything for themselves, or even to undo the work of the past before they could get a clear start. Hence when the rate of *recent* progress is found to have been rapid the favourable inference is strengthened.

Cultivated area of Greece.

Including both the Ionian and the Ægean islands, the Kingdom of Greece contains about fourteen millions and a half of acres. Nearly one-half of this total area is occupied by forests, marshes, or rocky tracts, and is not at present susceptible of cultivation. According to M. Tombasis, who is of special authority on Greek agriculture, one-fourth of the total area is under cultivation : but of this nearly one-half is always fallow. Hence not much more than one-seventh of the total area is productive at any given time. One-fourth, therefore, of the territory which might be cultivated is not under cultivation at all. But it is

satisfactory to learn from M. Mansolas that some 500,000 acres have been brought under cultivation within the last fifteen years.

Agricultural products.

The population of the Kingdom, as given by the last census (February, 1880) is 1,679,000. It is computed that from one-third to one-fourth of this population is engaged in agricultural or pastoral pursuits. The increase since 1830 has been large in all the staple agricultural products, and in some it has been remarkable. The cultivation of olives has increased about three-fold since 1830; of figs, six-fold; of currants, fifteen-fold; of vines, twenty-eight-fold. The progress of the currant trade has been tolerably steady since 1858. M. Moraitinis puts the area occupied by currant-vines at nearly 40,000 acres; M. Mansolas, at even a higher figure. The average yearly production of currants, before the Greek War of Independence, was about ten million pounds weight. It has lately risen to upwards of a hundred-and-fifty million pounds weight. The produce from arable land is stated to have increased fifty per cent. in the last fifteen years.

Impediments to good farming.

Creditable progress has been made, then, by Greece in all the chief branches of her agriculture; in some branches, even great progress. And yet competent

observers are generally agreed that Greek agriculture is still very far from doing justice to the natural resources of the country. The causes of this defect deserve the earnest attention of all who wish to see the prosperity of Greece set on a firm basis. Want of capital is unquestionably the great want of all for Greek agriculture. But, if abundant capital were forthcoming to-morrow, it would still have to contend with a special set of difficulties created by the want of capital at the critical moment nearly fifty years ago. After the War of Independence the Greek lands which the Turks had left—on receiving a large compensation at the instance of the Powers—became the property of the Greek State. Few of the purchasers were found. Part of the land was granted by the Government in small lots to peasant holders, subject to taxes on the produce. A great part was left in the hands of the Government, and remained unproductive.

Small holdings.

The system of small holdings, the *petite culture*, has lasted to this day,—the partition of land being especially minute in the mountainous districts and in the Ægean islands. This system has been a constant bar to the introduction of scientific farming. The average agriculturist has been too poor and too ignorant to

attempt it. The mode of taxation—a modification of the old Turkish system—is such that, as Mr. Tuckerman says, 'the husbandman suffers delay in bringing his crop to market,—loses by depreciation while awaiting the tax-gatherer's arrival,—and finally in the tax to which it is subjected.' The importance of encouraging better methods of farming has been recognised from the earliest days of Greece. Capodistria, when President of the Republic, founded in 1831 an Agricultural School at Tiryns. This was, on the whole, a failure, and was closed in 1865. It has been replaced by a more technical school, of which M. Mansolas gives a more encouraging report. But the case of Greece is widely different from that of a country in which the land is occupied chiefly by an educated class of large or considerable land-holders. In Greece each several holder of one or two acres has to be converted to scientific farming before agricultural reform can make way. And the natural conservatism of an agricultural population is intensified by the fact that in these matters every man has hitherto been his own master, with no obligation beyond the payment of his taxes to the State. It is not even the ambition of the peasant farmer to get as much out of the land as he can. The difficulties of communication limit his mar-

ket, and he is usually content if he can satisfy the wants of his household, with perhaps a margin of profit. Tradition and the influence of climate combine to make these wants few and simple, and so to restrict the amount of energy employed. In Greece, as elsewhere, it is in one sense a misfortune that the peasantry are contented with so little.

Dearth of labour.

Again, the population of Greece is thin—excluding the Ionian Islands, it has been computed at fifty-eight to the square mile—and the system of small holdings increases the dearth of agricultural labour. The destruction of the forests in Greece has been due mainly to the long unrestrained recklessness of the peasants and to the depredations of the wandering shepherds with their flocks of goats. The destruction of the forests has in turn injured the climate and helped to dry up the rivers. The Greek government has not been insensible to these evils, but it has had to contend against deeply-rooted prejudices and traditions—those, namely, which were engendered by Turkish rule. Good results may be anticipated from a law lately passed, which permits the tax-paying tenant of public land to buy it from the State, and to pay the purchase money by instalments spread over eighteen years. This should tend to bring in a better class of agricul-

Loss of wood and water.

turists, and also by degrees to enlarge the cultivated area.

Roads.

The want of roads in Greece has been an obstacle to agricultural industry, as to enterprise of every kind. Seaboard towns sometimes import their wheat, when there is an ample supply at a distance perhaps of a day's journey inland, simply because the transport by mules or horses would be too expensive. Mr. Tuckerman computes that there are about two hundred miles of 'good highway' in Greece Proper: and if by 'good' is meant 'thoroughly practicable for carriages,' this is perhaps not far from the mark. The roads of the mainland, according to an official return in 1878, have an aggregate length of 889 kilomètres, 933 mètres; *i.e.*, about 550 miles. The fact is that there has been no great demand for roads on the part of the unambitious agricultural class, and the country, with its already heavy burdens, has felt no sufficiently strong incentive to proceed vigorously with a work of such heavy cost. Roadmaking is enormously expensive in a country so full of rocky tracts and intersected by frequent chains of hills. But already the exigencies of trade are beginning to open up the Morea. Last summer, in going from Laconia into Messenia, I came on the still unfinished road

which is being made from Kalamata to Tripolitza, and followed it for some way. A few more such first-rate highways would be the greatest of boons to the country. There is still no continuous road between Kalamata and Patras; there is nothing worthy to be called a road between Tripolitza and Sparta. The poet tells us that, when Apollo passed from Delos to Delphi,

> The children of Hephæstus were his guides,
> Clearing the tangled path before the god,
> Making a wild land smooth;

and every modern tourist will echo the wish that the rising Polytechnic School of Athens may produce some more 'road-making sons of Hephæstus.' But it would be a mistake to infer, from the deficiency of roads which is still felt, that Greece has been inactive in public works. Some dozen harbours have been constructed or restored, lighthouses have been erected at all the dangerous points in the Greek seas, drainage works have been executed in several places, eleven new cities have arisen on ancient sites, more than forty towns and more than six hundred villages have been rebuilt since the war. Public works.

The manufacturing industries of Greece have made rapid progress within the last few years. According Manufactures.

to M. Moraitinis, the Peiræus[1] did not contain a single steam manufactory in 1868. It has now more than thirty such establishments; and the kingdom contains in all no less than 112 steam factories. Most of these have been established within the last ten years. There are, besides, about 700 factories which do not use steam. The number of artisans employed is about 25,000, and the annual products represent a value of about six millions sterling.

At the Great Exhibition of 1851 Greece was represented by thirty-six exhibitors. At Paris in 1878 it was represented, according to the list of M. Mansolas, by 533. He notes the progress of cotton-spinning, which since 1870 has diminished the importation of that article by nearly two-thirds. The export of Greek wines has also increased very largely. The large mulberry plantations in the valley of the Eurotas attest the growing importance of the silk manufacture. Though Government patronage has never been wanting, the rapid progress of recent

[1] Sixty years ago the Peiræus—Porto Leone, under the Turks—had well-nigh ceased to be even a port. The traces of its ancient dignity were few and modest. There was a piece of deal boarding, projecting a few feet into the sea, to serve as a landing-stage for small boats; and there was a wooden hut for a guard.

years has been due, M. Mansolas thinks, chiefly to private enterprise and to the power of association. This power is gradually overcoming the obstacles long presented by a thin population, by the want of capital, by the absence of machinery, and by the slender demand for luxuries. It is a good sign that, whereas in 1845 Greece was importing twice the value of her exports, the ratio of imports to exports has lately been less than three to two. Forty-seven years ago Lord Palmerston predicted a bright future for Greek commerce, and already the prediction has been in some measure fulfilled. Next to agiculture, the mainstay of Greece is her merchant marine, trading with Turkey and the ports of the Levant. In 1821 Greece had only about 450 vessels; the number in 1874 was 5,202 representing an aggregate burden of 250,077 tons; and the merchant marine of Greece ranks, in the scale of importance, as the seventh of the world.

Increase of exports.

Merchant marine.

The question of national education has from the first days of recovered freedom engaged the most earnest attention of the Greek people. Education is for the Greeks not merely what it is for every civilized nation, the necessary basis of all worthy hope; it is, further, the surest pledge of their unity as

Education.

a people both within and without the boundaries of the present kingdom; it is the practical vindication of their oldest birthright; it is the symbol of the agencies which wrought their partial deliverance; it is the living witness of those qualities and those traditions on which they found their legitimate aspirations for the future.

During three centuries and a half of Turkish rule, among the influences by which the Greek nationality was preserved from effacement were the studies which fostered its language and its religion; and, when the earliest hopes of freedom began to be felt, the first sure promise of its approach was the fact that those studies had been enlarged and had received a new impulse. Koraes struck the true note in the preface to his translation of Beccaria *On Crimes and Punishments*, which he dedicated in 1802 to the young Ionian Republic. 'You are now,' he said, addressing the studious youth of Greece, 'the instructors and teachers of your country, but the time is fast approaching when you will be called upon to become her lawgivers. Unite, then, your wealth and your exertions in her behalf, since in her destitution she can boast no public treasury for the instruction of her children; and forget not that in her

brighter days their education was a public duty entrusted to her rulers.'

If ever there was a case in which the deliverance of a nation was directly traceable to the awakening of the national intelligence, that case was the Greek War of Independence. No people could have a more cogent practical reason than the Greeks have for believing that knowledge is power; but they do not value it only or chiefly because it is power. The love of knowledge is an esential part of the Greek character—an instinct which their historical traditions strengthen, indeed, but have not created. After the war, when the troubled period of Capodistria's Presidency had given place to settled institutions, one of the first great tasks taken in hand was that of thoroughly organising public instruction.

The situation in 1833.

M. Burnouf's remark, quoted by Mr. Sergeant, that public instruction was 'almost non-existent' in Greece in 1833, is true in a sense, but needs qualification. It is true that there was no complete or uniform system of public instruction. In the political situation of the Greeks before the war such a thing had not been possible. On the other hand, many elements of such a system had been supplied by the strenuous efforts made at many particular centres of Greek life

during a long series of years. In fact the tradition of Greek culture had, under the heaviest discouragements, been preserved unbroken from the conquest of Constantinople, though it was only in the latter part of the seventeenth century that a few of the schools began to be prosperous or famous. Among these were the lyceums of Bucharest in Wallachia and Jassi in Moldavia, which had been protected by a series of Phanariot Hospodars; the schools of Janina in Epirus, which had owed much to the beneficence of the brothers Zosima, 'the Medicis of Modern Greece;' the gymnasium of Smyrna, the college of Scio, the Greek college at Odessa, and many more of nearly equal repute. By 1815 almost every Greek community had its school. Ten years of war and confusion interrupted the work. But, in 1833, there were still the materials, however scattered or imperfect, with which to begin; and there was a spontaneous public sympathy with the object—a sympathy which the successful struggle for freedom had helped not a little to quicken.

Greek Schools before the Revolution.

Under the system of public instruction adopted in modern Greece,[1] three successive grades of schools lead

System of Public Instruction.

[1] The chief organizer of this system was George Gennadius, the father of the present Minister of Greece in England, and

up to the university: (1) the *Demotic* or Primary National Schools; (2) the *Hellenic* Schools, secondary grammar schools; (3) the *Gymnasia*, higher schools of scholarship and science, in which the range and the level of teaching are much the same as in the German gymnasium, or in the upper parts of our public schools. From the Gymnasium the next step is to the University of Athens. In all three grades of schools, and also at the University, instruction is gratuitous. Primary education is in theory compulsory as well as gratuitous, but in practice the principle of compulsion has seldom been applied. Possibly it has seldom been found necessary, for there can be no doubt that primary education in Greece has made extraordinary progress since 1833—such progress as could have been made only where the love of knowledge was an instinct of the people—and that at the present time Greece can compare favourably in this respect

Primary education.

a descendant of Gennadius Scholarius, the first Patriarch of Constantinople after the Turkish Conquest. George Gennadius was studying in Germany when the Greek Revolution broke out. He served in the war; he was a prominent speaker in the assemblies; and on the settlement of the State he devoted his life to public education. Many of the Bishops and scholars of Greece have been his pupils; and the memory of his unselfish energy is still held in deserved honour.

with any country in the world. In 1835 there were about 70 primary schools, with less than 7,000 scholars; in 1845, about 450 schools, with 35,000 scholars; in 1874, about 1,130 schools, with 70,000 scholars.

Higher education.

The growth of the higher schools and of the University has not been less remarkable. Within five-and-twenty years the number of the 'Hellenic' schools has been nearly doubled: that of the Gymnasia has been nearly trebled; and the total numbers of pupils have grown in corresponding ratio. In 1841 the University of Athens, then recently founded, had 292 students; in 1872 it had 1244. A few years ago it was estimated that about 81,000 persons—that is about one-eighteenth of the entire population—was under instruction in Greece, either at public or at private establishments. The sum spent by Greece on public instruction is rather more than 5 per cent. of its total expenditure—a larger proportion than is devoted to the same purpose by France, Italy, Austria, or Germany. When Mr. Tuckerman claims for Greece that 'she stands first in the rank of nations—not excepting the United States—as a *self-educated* people,' the claim, righly understood, is just. It means, first, that nowhere else does the State spend so large a fraction of its disposable revenue on public

education; secondly, that nowhere else is there such a spontaneous public desire to profit by the educational advantages which the State affords.

The over-stocked callings.

Closely connected with the progress of the higher education in Greece is a phenomenon which every visitor observes, and which has hitherto remained an unsolved problem of modern Greek society. This is the disproportionately large number of men who, having received a university education, become lawyers, physicians, journalists, or politicians. M. Mansolas, after observing that the 'dominant calling' in Greece is that of the agriculturist, assigns the second place to 'the class of men who exercise the liberal professions, of whom the number is excessive relatively to the rest of the population.' Mr. Sergeant quotes on this subject part of a Report drawn up in 1872 by Mr. Watson, one of our Secretaries of Legation at Athens. 'While there is felt in Greece,' Mr. Watson says, 'a painful dearth of men whose education has fitted them to supply some of the multifarious material wants of the country—such, for instance, as surveying, farming, road-making, and bridge-building—there is, on the other hand, a plethora of lawyers, writer, and clerks, who, in the absence of regular occupation, become agitators

and coffee-house politicians.' As lately as June, 1878, the correspondent of the *Times* at Athens wrote as follows:—'Public life is here the monopoly of the class exercising the so-called liberal professions—of advocates and university men, whose name is legion,—an upper sort of proletariate, divided into two everlastingly antagonistic factions of placemen and place-hunters.'

Causes of the over-supply.

It is easy to assign one set of causes for this state of things. Where a school and university education is offered free of charge to a people of keen intellectual appetite, it is natural that an unusually large proportion of persons should go through the university course. And where, as in Greece, agriculture is under a system which gives little scope to the higher sort of intelligence, while there is neither public nor private capital enough to provide employment for many architects or civil engineers, it is natural that an unduly large proportion of university graduates should turn to one of the liberal professions, or to some calling in which their literary training can be made available.

1. Condition of Greece itself.

Mr. Tuckerman has described vividly the process by which 'the coffee-house politician' is developed. A young man, of somewhat better birth than the

agricultural labourer or the common sailor, finds himself at eighteen a burden on a household which is hardly maintained by the industry of his father. If he followed in his father's steps, his lot would be to till the soil for what, when rent and taxes have been paid, is little more than a bare livelihood, or perhaps to subsist on the salary of a small public office. But the boy has been at a school of the higher grade, and, with a natural taste for learning, has conceived the ambition to make something better of his life than this. What, then, is he to do? He would be glad to get a clerkship in one of the commercial houses of Athens, Patras, or Syra; but there are hundreds of applicants whose chances are better than his. Even if he could afford to try his fortune in a foreign country, the risk would be, in his case, too great. Athens, the busy centre of so many activities, is his one hope. Surely there he will find something to do. He makes his way to Athens, attends the University, and becomes interested in his studies. His years of university life are made tolerably happy by the companionship of fellow-students whose situation resembles his own. Literary and political discussion, enjoyed over the evening coffee and cigarette, comes to be his chief delight.

At last he takes his degree. He must choose a profession. The Bar is already overcrowded. A perpetual series of epidemics would be required to provide moderate occupation for one half of the physicians. He has not patience to undertake the duties of a schoolmaster among the Greeks of Turkey. It remains that he should be a politician. He writes for the newspapers, and awaits the moment when his party shall hold its next distribution of loaves and fishes. He receives, perhaps, a small post, or some other reward. Thenceforth he is devoted to his new career. Through years of plenty and years of leanness, he is content to wait on the revolutions of the political wheel. If it is suggested to him that this is an unsatisfactory life, his answer is simple: Can you show me a better?

2. Influx of Greeks from Turkey.

Such cases may be common, and may help to explain why, in addition to the overstocked liberal professions, there should be a large number of party writers and place-seekers. But the continued oversupply in all these careers would still remain inexplicable if we confined our view to the kingdom of Greece. The clue is to be found in the relations existing between free Greece and that which is still emphatically 'enslaved' Greece—ἡ δούλη Ἑλλάς.

The kingdom of Greece offers a university education free of charge not only to its own subjects but also to the Greek subjects of the Porte. As to the measure in which the ranks of university men at Athens have been swelled by Greek subjects of Turkey, an interesting piece of evidence will be found in Mr. H. M. Baird's *Modern Greece*. Mr. Baird attended classes at the University of Athens, and became intimately acquainted with its life and working. 'It is a circumstance well worth the noticing,' he writes, 'that *rather more than one-half* of the matriculated students are from districts under the rule of the Sultan.' Thus Athens is a focus of intellectual life not only for the kingdom of Greece but for the Greeks of Turkey: and the already redundant supply of lettered men is further increased by an influx from abroad.

Balance of occupations destroyed.

Hence the social equilibrium of Greece is deranged in a manner to which no other country presents a parallel. In other countries the law of supply and demand roughly suffices to maintain a natural balance between the number of those who engage in productive industries and the number of those who embrace the liberal professions or seek office from the State. In Greece this is not so. The population

of Greece is a million and a half. The number of Greeks in Turkey is about five millions. Among these five millions there are, of course, many who desire a political or official life. They cannot have this under conditions which they can accept in Turkey. They are therefore driven to seek it in Greece. Educated men, or men desirous of education, throng into the kingdom of Greece from Epirus, Thessaly, Macedonia, Thrace, Crete. But unfortunately there is no reciprocity. The industrial populations of those provinces are not at the disposition of Greece. Thus the balance of occupations is destroyed. 'Five competitors at least,' says M. Moraitinis, 'dispute each public office.' He anticipates an objection. 'This invasion from without —this plethora of applicants, so troublesome in its effects—could not free Greece stop it?' 'No,' he answers, 'the evil is unavoidable. Greece has the duty of receiving all her children who come to her from without. To repel them would be a treason against kinship; it would be to deny the past and to blight the future: it would be, also, to forego the precious aid of devoted patriotism and of valuable ability.'

Mr. Watson, in the Report already noticed, points

out, indeed, that the plethora of academically-trained men is not an unmixed evil. 'Undoubtedly,' he says, 'it confers considerable advantages on the Levant in general. . . . Many provinces of the Ottoman Empire are indebted to the seats of learning in Athens for a supply of intelligent doctors, divines, lawyers, chemists, clerks.' 'The *rôle* of Greece in the contemporary East,' M. Lenormant writes, 'closely resembles its *rôle* in antiquity. . . The Hellenic race represents the motive power in the Ottoman Empire, as, twenty-two centuries ago, it represented it in Persian Asia.' It may be fairly urged, as Mr. Sergeant well urges, that the very existence of this so-called 'over-education' is a proof of the fitness of Greece to perform the part of a civilizing power in the East.

Function of Greeks in the Levant.

It may also be said that the general influence of high education widely diffused has done much to leaven Greek life with the spirit of order, industry, and sustained effort. Mr. Sergeant's remarks on this point are illustrated by the testimony of foreign observers to the decorous behaviour of the Athenian population on occasions which in most other capitals would scarcely fail to evoke some popular turbulence, or even to let loose the passions of a mob. In

Spirit of order in Greece.

1843. the crisis of the revolution under the former reign, which resulted in King Otho signing the constitutional decree, the whole population of Athens was in the streets. 'For an entire day the open space in front of the palace was filled with an excited and determined people and a revolted soldiery. All police surveillance was suspended; men of the lowest class paraded the streets with loaded arms, and the largest opportunity for license and lawlessness was afforded: yet not a gun was fired, nor a stone raised, nor was even a flower plucked from the public gardens.' The Greek capital, in this instance, only reflected the normal character of the Greek people: there is plenty of popular enthusiasm; but there is no rowdyism.

Probably the large development of manufacturing industry and commerce in Greece during the last few years will tend gradually to diminish the pressure of candidates for the learned or literary callings, by showing men where they may find a sphere of honourable exertion without permanently leaving the country. In fact the intelligent enterprise and power of combination which have lately been exhibited in this field go far to prove that it has already become attractive to men of education. Thus new banks

Growth of commercial enterprise.

have been established; a new steam navigation company for the Mediterranean and the Black Sea has been formed, under the Greek flag, by Greek capitalists; and the rights of the Franco-Italian company, which since 1865 had worked the mines of Laurium, have been purchased by a new company composed chiefly of Greeks. Projects have been entertained for lines of railway from Athens to Patras, and from Patros to Pyrgos on the north-west coast of the Morea. A correspondent quoted by Mr. Tuckerman confirms the view indicated above. 'These private undertakings,' he writes, 'including mining and railway operations, having already begun to produce most satisfactory results, not merely as regards the social, but also as regards the political condition of the country. It is thus that we have lately witnessed quite an unprecedented phenomenon. A large number of clerks and other *employés* of the Civil Service are sending in their resignations, and are accepting posts in these new establishments at rates of remuneration even lower than the Government salaries, preferring the stability and hope of advancement offered them by private enterprise to the torturing and ruinous uncertainty with which they held offices dependent on the arbitrary will of each successive

Its result.

minister. In this new movement I see the solution of one of the great difficulties this country has been labouring under—the fight for public offices.'

The Civil Service and Universal Suffrage.

It is an opinion which is often heard in Greece, both from natives and from foreign residents, that permanence in the Civil Service appointments would do much to steady the politics of the country; others, again, say that this is made virtually impossible by universal suffrage, since the majority will always prefer the chances afforded by a frequent redistribution of many small prizes. In England there are about fifty-two electors to every thousand inhabitants; in France, with universal suffrage, there are 267; in Greece no fewer than 311. It is noteworthy that M. Moraitinis—an unquestionably intelligent friend of progress in Greece—appears to regard universal suffrage as being, for Greece, an institution of doubtful expediency, and even goes so far as to suggest that the constitution 'might and should be modified' in the direction of withdrawing the suffrage from those 'who having nothing to preserve, are ready to sell their conscience' (p. 569).

Greek political life.

But we are concerned with Greece and its constitution as they now are. On the main point there is little difference of opinion. The great need of

all for Greece, if Greece is to go on prospering, is that politics should cease to be a game played between the holders and seekers of office, and that all local or personal interests whatsoever should be uniformly and steadily subordinated to the public interests of the country. Before this can be thoroughly secured two things must come to pass. First, adequate outlets must be found for the energies of the educated class who have hitherto been driven into making politics a livelihood: this, as we have seen, has in a certain measure been accomplished already, and there seems reason to hope that the growing material prosperity of Greece will by degrees provide a complete solution. Secondly, the Greek people must bring a sound and vigorous public opinion to bear on public affairs—not by fits and starts, but steadily. It has been said, with too much truth, that Greece has been a nation of opinions without a public opinion. The free growth and effective expression of public opinion has been checked by too much centralization,—by the tendency of many administrations to regard a close bureaucracy as the only shelter for authority. There can be no vitality of public opinion without diffusion of power; but for a long time the average Greek voter in the pro-

vinces was controlled by no real sense of personal responsibility to the country. Public meetings for the discussion of proposed measures have been rare out of Athens. Along with excessive centralization another cause has been at work—the tendency of the Greek character to set the interests of a district or a town above the general interests of the nation. This 'particularism'—scarcely less marked to-day than in the Greek commonwealths of old—may be traced, now as formerly, in some measure to the physical configuration of the country, and to the want, still seriously felt, of easy communication. The old Greeks had common national characteristics, but never formed a nation; the Greeks of to-day are a nation, with a strong national sentiment, but sometimes with too little unity of national purpose. Nothing but such unity of purpose can enforce those reforms which the country most needs—reforms of principle, not of detail,—the choice of public men on the public grounds of character and fitness, the management of the finances with undeviating regard to the thorough re-establishment of the national credit. There have, indeed, been critical moments when the public opinion of Greece has asserted itself in such questions with decisive result.

The successful protest of 1875 against ministerial infringement of the constitution has been the most recent example; and M. Moraitinis may justly argue that a maturity of political education is proved by the disciplined loyalty with which, at that crisis, all classes united to uphold the constitution by constitutional means. The same general characteristic appeared also in the crisis of 1843 and 1862; and it was better marked in 1862 than in 1843, and in 1875 than in 1862. But then, as M. Moraitinis adds, when the danger is past public opinion goes to sleep again, 'and individual interests resume their ascendency.' What is wanted is that public opinion should be always vigilant.

Difficulties of Greece.

No impartial observer can refuse to admit that Greece has already done much, and is now in a fair way to do more. Few, probably, would deny that from the outset she has had to contend with grave difficulties not of her own making. In the first place it is only since the beginning of the present reign, that is, since 1863, that Greece has been in the full practical enjoyment of constitutional liberty. Secondly, Greece began life not only as a poor country, in which the first elements of prosperity had to be created anew, but as a country loaded with debt for loans of which

only a fraction had ever been applied to her benefit. Those who wish to read the whole story of the Greek loans in the light of contemporary documents may be referred to a recent pamphlet on the subject, consisting of extracts from the English newspapers and periodicals of the day, put together without comment.[1] Among other facts which deserve to be more generally known, it will be found that of the second loan of £1,200,000, all that ever reached Greece was the amount of £209,000.

The frontier.

Lastly, there has been that most serious and permanent obstacle of all, the original defect of a bad frontier. It has been already shown how this has affected the balance of social and political life in Greece. The dilemma raised by that ill-judged limitation of the new kingdom could not be expressed more clearly or concisely than in the words of the late Edgar Quinet.[2] 'I am afraid,' he wrote in 1857, 'that the artificial boundaries of the new State, and the conditions imposed upon it, may have the effect of hindering its development. Hence, a false position

[1] *The Greek Loans of* 1824 *and* 1825. London: H. S. King. 1878.

[2] Preface to *La Grèce moderne et ses rapports avec l'Antiquité.*

for the Greeks, and a perpetual temptation to get out of it. If they stretch out their hands to their brethren who are still under the yoke, they rouse the anger of their protectors; if they resign themselves to remaining where they are, they are reduced to a hopeless plight,—with no outlets, no commerce, no relations; and their brethren accuse them of betrayal.'

Letter from Leopold of Saxe-Coburg (1830).

An interesting document in illustration of this view has lately been given to the world. In February, 1830, Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg accepted the Crown of Greece, offered to him in a joint note from Lord Aberdeen and the French and Russian Ambassadors in London; but after some negotiations, he finally declined it in May of the same year. An Athenian newspaper[1] has printed the letter, hitherto unpublished, which Leopold addressed to Charles X. of France on May 23rd, 1830—two days after his final decision. In this he states the reasons for his resolve. Prominent among them is this con-

[1] The Ὥρα of Dec. 22, 1878 (=Jan. 3, 1879). This was written in Jan., 1879. In the *Spectator* of March 27, 1880, 'an Epirote' has published an English version of the entire letter, with some just comments.

sideration—that a new ruler of Greece would begin his work at a hopeless disadvantage if he were regarded by the Greek nation as a party to the disastrous truncation of the territory. By the Treaty of Adrianople (September, 1829), the boundary line of Greece had been drawn from near the entrance of the Gulf of Volo on the east to the Gulf of Arta on the west. But by a new decision of the Powers (February 3rd, 1830) a large slice was cut off. Leopold does justice to the natural feeling which would make it a bitter sacrifice for the Greeks to leave their brethren in Continental Hellas—as well as in Crete, Samos, and elsewhere—under that yoke which all alike had striven to shake off; and he hopes that Charles, 'with the magnanimity which distinguishes him,' will appreciate this. He held that in the narrow limits now imposed on the country—the territory adjacent to the Gulfs of Volo and Arta being cut off—it could not be thoroughly prosperous. The truth of Leopold's forecast was recognised at the Berlin Congress last year by M. Waddington.

The people of Greece are industrious, singularly temperate, with a strong regard for the ties of the family, and with the virtues which that implies; they

have proved at more than one trying conjuncture that they have learned the lessons of constitutional freedom; and they possess a versatile intelligence which justly entitles them to be regarded as the gifted race of South-Eastern Europe. Men of all parties and opinions are interested in forming a true judgment of what the Greeks can or cannot achieve. So long as their character and capacity are imperfectly or incorrectly estimated in this country, a necessary element of every 'Eastern Question' will be taken at an erroneous value, and the margin of possible miscalculation will be so far increased. The commercial importance of Greece is already considerable. Its political antecedents and prospects must not be too hastily judged. Narrow prejudices must be laid aside. We must recognize fully and fairly how much the Greeks have done and are still doing how much they have had to suffer, what difficulties they have overcome, with what disadvantages they are still contending: we must distinguish between ambitions which deserve to be reproved and those aspirations for a free development of national life which no people can renounce without losing national self-respect. The Hellenic influence is still

the best hope of a higher civilization for those lands with which it is historically associated. It is the interest of Europe—and certainly not least of England—that this influence should have, at least, a fair chance of showing what it can do.

BYRON IN GREECE.

THE name of Lord Byron is inseparably associated with the Greek War of Independence. But the part which he performed is commonly regarded as the romantic adventure of a poet, not as the serious enterprise of one who brought practical ability and sober judgment to a cause which he viewed without illusions. More than this—there have lately been symptoms of a tendency to treat Byron's philhellenism as a sham. Nothing in the last episode of his life—so we have been given to understand—was genuine or sincere, except the aversion which he entertained for the Greeks.

If Byron's mind can in any degree be judged from his recorded words and deeds, there is no imputation which he would more decisively have repelled, no reproach from which he would have been more earnestly anxious that his memory should be vindi-

cated. At a time like the present, when it is contemplated to raise a national monument to Byron, and when the philhellenic sympathies of England have been rekindled by a crisis in the destinies of Greece, it appears not inopportune to attempt such a vindication in the only manner which is relevant—that is, by a connected statement of the facts from which the reader must draw his own conclusions.

There are two essential conditions for a just estimate of Byron's undertaking: (1) his journey to Greece in 1823 must be viewed in the light of the impressions which he had derived from his earlier journey in 1809: (2) his part in the affairs of 1823-4 must be considered in relation to the general history of the Greek War. I am not acquainted with any narrative which meets these two conditions: the brief sketch which follows is offered as an imperfect attempt to fulfil them.

1809. Byron sailed from Falmouth with his friend Hobhouse on June 26, 1809. He was then twenty-one; and, though not yet known to fame, had just had his first piece of literary success. He had published the 'Hours of Idleness' in the spring of 1807, while he was still an undergraduate at Cambridge, and the critique in the *Edinburgh Review* had come a year later,

in the spring of 1808. Byron's 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers' had appeared just before he set out on his travels, and had been well received. But he started on his wanderings in a sad and even bitter mood; all the world was out of joint. He and his friend went through Portugal and Spain, and, after some stay at Malta, reached the shores of Western Greece about the end of September. The English brig of war which brought them remained at anchor for a few days off Patras; thence they sailed along the Acarnanian coast past Ithaca and Leucadia—

> The barren spot
> Where sad Penelope o'erlooked the wave,
> And onward viewed the mount, not yet forgot,
> The lover's refuge and the Lesbian's grave.

On September 26th they landed on the Albanian coast at Prevesa. From Prevesa a journey of three days took them to Janina in Epirus, a place which Janina.
at this time was the true centre of Greek life in Europe, being greatly superior to Athens, as Byron himself notes, 'in the wealth, refinement, learning, and dialect of its inhabitants.' Janina was the capital of one of the six Turkish pashaliks into which European Greece was divided, and its pasha at this time was the celebrated Mohammed Ali. This remarkable man,

though he sometimes called himself a Turk, really sprang from an Albanian family who had embraced the Moslem faith, and his ambition, which he afterwards reached for a while, was to make himself independent of the Sultan with the aid of the military Albanian race. At that time, however, he was helping the new Sultan, Mahmud II., to carry out a system of centralized despotism in the provinces, and just then was besieging a refractory pasha at Berat in Northern Albania, not far from his own country palace at Tepelen. He invited Byron to visit him at Tepelen, and the friends reached that place from Janina after a ride of nine days through a magnificent hill country. Byron has described the gorgeous scene at Ali's court:—

Tepelen.

> Amid no common pomp the despot sate,
> While busy preparation shook the court;
> Slaves, eunuchs, soldiers, guests, and santons wait;
> Within, a palace, and without, a fort;
> Here men of every clime appear to make resort.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> The wild Albanian, kirtled to his knee,
> With shawl-girt head and ornamented gun,
> And gold-embroidered garments, fair to see;
> And crimson-scarfed men of Macedon;
> The Delhi, with his cap of terror on,[1]

[1] Compare Byron's letter to his mother (Nov. 12, 1809)

And crooked glaive; the lively supple Greek;
And swarthy Nubia's mutilated son;
The bearded Turk that rarely deigns to speak,
Master of all around—too potent to be meek.

Ali received Byron with distinction. There is a curious touch in one of Byron's Eastern tales which shows that afterwards, if not then, he had learned the real character of this man. Giaffir, in the *Bride of Abydos*, poisons his brother Abdallah with a cup of coffee at the bath:—

'He drank one draught—nor needed more!'

Ali of Janina had actually poisoned another pasha in this way, and married the murdered man's daughter, while Byron was in Greece.

From Tepelen Byron and Hobhouse returned to Prevesa. Thence they intended to go by sea to Patras. They were nearly lost, however, in a Turkish vessel, which was driven on the coast of Suli, and the kind offices of the Suliots at this pinch laid the foundation of the interest which Byron felt in them when he came back to Greece fourteen years later. The

describing this visit:—'The Albanians, in their dresses (the most magnificent in the world, consisting of a long *white kilt*, gold-worked cloak, crimson velvet gold-laced jacket and waistcoat, silver-mounted pistols and daggers), *the Tartars with their high caps*,' &c.

friends now went over land to Mesolonghi, with a guard of Albanians. Byron has described the night scene at their bivouac on the Gulf of Arta, as they were beginning this journey :—

A bivouac.

> Where lone Utraikey[1] forms its winding cove,
> And weary waves retire to gleam at rest,
> How brown the foliage of the green hill's grove,
> Nodding at midnight o'er the calm bay's breast :
> . . . . . .
> On the smooth shore the night-fires brightly blazed,
> The feast was done, the red wine circling fast,
> And he that unawares had there ygàzed
> With gaping wonderment had stared aghast,
> For ere night's midmost, stillest hour was past,
> The native revels of the troop began ;
> Each Palikar his sabre from him cast,
> And bounding hand in hand, man linked to man,
> Yelling their uncouth dirge, long danced the kirtled clan.

At Mesolonghi they dismissed the Albanian guards, Byron keeping with him two Albanian servants, who proved useful and faithful. They then crossed over the narrow strait to Patras, spent a fortnight there, and moved on to Vostizza, where they had their first glimpse of Parnassus. Crossing the Gulf of Corinth to Delphi, they rode through the Parnassus and Helicon country to Thebes, and then crossed Cithæron into Attica.

They came in sight of Phyle on the evening of

[1] Lutraki.

Christmas Day, 1809. The view of the Athenian plain impressed Byron strongly; he ended by preferring it even to what he had hitherto thought unapproachable—Cintra: and, though Constantinople shook his allegiance when he was on the spot, he came back to that preference. Byron did not care for classical topography; yet the charm of Attica detained him for two months. The friends had lodgings in the house of a Greek lady, the widow of the English Vice-Consul; and the eldest of her three daughters, Theresa Macri,—then no more than fifteen,—was the 'Maid of Athens' to whom Byron addressed the lines of farewell. When the 5th of March came, and Byron and Hobhouse were to sail for Smyrna, they galloped down to the Peiræus, and tore themselves away in the haste of desperation. Attica, 1810.

At Smyrna, on March 28, 1810, Byron finished the second canto of *Childe Harold*, which he had begun at Janina on October 31, 1809. From Smyrna they made an excursion of a few days to the ruins of Ephesus. The lines in the *Siege of Corinth*— Asia Minor.

> The jackals' troop, in gather'd cry,
> Bay'd from afar complainingly—

were suggested by a reminiscence of this visit. The travellers left Smyrna in the frigate Salsette

on April 11, and spent a fortnight at anchor off the Troad, which Byron concisely describes as a good field for conjecture and snipe-shooting. Then they were kept some time waiting for a fair wind in the Dardanelles, and here on May 3, 1810, Byron swam from Sestos to Abydos—only about a mile, with a dangerous current, however. This is a feat of which he was exceedingly proud; it is repeatedly mentioned in his letters; and in a note on the passage in the *Bride of Abydos*—'The winds are high on Helle's wave'—he brings it in, when alluding to the controversy as to the meaning of the 'boundless Hellespont.' 'Not foreseeing a speedy conclusion, I amused myself with swimming across it in the meantime.'

Constantinople.

On May 14th they reached Constantinople. There is an interesting notice of his appearance there by a traveller who chanced to meet him. 'We were interrupted in our debate by the entrance of a stranger, whom, on the first glance, I guessed to be an Englishman, but lately arrived at Constantinople. He wore a scarlet coat, richly embroidered with gold, in the style of an English aide-de-camp's dress uniform,[1]

[1] It does not appear what this uniform of Byron's was: it may have been a mere caprice.

with two heavy epaulets. His countenance announced him to be about the age of two and twenty. His features were remarkably delicate, and would have given him a feminine appearance, but for the manly expression of his fine blue eyes. On entering the inner shop he took off his feathered cocked-hat, and showed a head of curly auburn hair, which improved in no small degree the uncommon beauty of his face.' Much as Byron was delighted with the view of the Golden Horn—preferring it at the time to anything he had seen—it is curious that the two special recollections of Constantinople which appear in his Eastern tales are both ghastly. In a note to the *Giaour* he mentions the heads of pashas which he had seen exhibited in the niche of the Seraglio gate: and the detail in the *Siege of Corinth*—

> The lean dogs beneath the wall
> Hold o'er the dead their carnival—

is taken from what Byron and Hobhouse actually saw at Constantinople under the wall of the Seraglio, in the cavities worn by the waters of the Bosporus.

Mr. Adair, the English ambassador, was just leaving Constantinople for England, and, by a firman which was granted to him as a parting favour, Byron had the rare privilege of seeing the mosques. He also

accompanied Mr. Adair to his farewell audience of the Sultan, and showed a degree of touchiness about his precedence on that occasion which was odd even in so young a man; it required the assurances of a veteran diplomatist, the Austrian internuncio, to restore his equanimity on the subject. On July 14, 1810, Adair, Byron, and Hobhouse left Constantinople on board the Salsette. Byron parted from his two friends, who were bound for England, at Zea (Ceos), a small island near the Attic coast. Here he was landed with his two Albanians, a Tartar, and his English servant Fletcher (the same who, fourteen years later, stood by his death-bed in Greece), and went on by boat to Athens.

The Morea.

From Athens he presently went to Patras, and thence he writes, on July 30, that he is in good health, though much bronzed. His next move was to Tripolitza, to visit the Turkish governor of the Morea, Veli, a son of his old friend Ali of Janina. He then made a tour in the Morea, and in October was back again at Patras, where we find him just recovering from a fever. As soon as he was well, he returned to Athens, and took lodgings in the Franciscan Convent there. His illness at Patras had emaciated him, and, being convinced

that this was becoming, he observed a strict regimen for keeping himself thin—hot baths, with a diet of rice and vinegar and water. The winter was enlivened by a visit of that eccentric personage of whom there is so good a portrait in *Eothen*—Lady Hester Stanhope. She took Byron to task for depreciating the intellect of woman, and Byron appears to have pleased by the somewhat equivocal compliment of deference. At the same time he was preparing his notes for the Second Canto of Childe Harold, and writing his 'Hints from Horace,' which are dated from the Convent at Athens. He also worked at modern Greek, and no doubt acquired much colloquial facility, though it may be doubted whether he knew that language very thoroughly. On June 3, 1811, he finally left Athens for Malta, on his way home. The prosaic fact seems to be that he was in need of remittances, but he was also beginning to be weary. Towards the end of July, 1811, he arrived in England, 1811.
bringing back two Greek servants, four Athenian skulls—which he afterwards gave, in a silver urn, to Sir Walter Scott—and a phial of hemlock, which he presented to his publisher.

His feeling for the land.

Let us now consider what the general impressions were which Byron seems to have brought home from

Greece. He had felt that two-fold spell—which Greece makes one—of the mountains and the sea; his feeling for the large historical memories of the land was ardent and sincere; but it rested on such slender knowledge that the shapes in which it clothed itself were necessarily vague, and might easily seem conventional, though for him they were not so:—

> Where'er we tread 'tis haunted, holy ground,
> No earth of thine is lost in vulgar mould,
> But one vast realm of wonder spreads around,
> And all the Muse's tales seem truly told,
> Till the sense aches with gazing to behold
> The scenes our earliest dreams have dwelt upon:
> Each hill and dale, each deepening glen and wold
> Defies the power which crush'd thy temples gone:
> Age shakes Athena's tower, but spares gray Marathon.

He cared nothing for the details of classical literature and art. 'I am not a collector, nor an admirer of collections;' there is some affectation in those words, but they fairly express his tone. Even in Ithaca he was much tried by a Greek host who was too familiar with the Odyssey. The Hellenic past never really lived before him. Given a Byron, the eloquent lines on the battle of Marathon might have been written with no more knowledge than that Marathon is on a

bay and that the Persians had bows. But his broad and brilliant strokes have their full effect when he describes what he sees. Take, for instance, this scene in Albania, north of Janina—near the spot from which the Berlin Treaty proposed to draw the new boundary of Greece :—

Dusky and huge, enlarging on the sight,
Nature's volcanic amphitheatre,
Chimæra's alps extend from left to right :
Beneath, a living valley seems to stir ;
Flocks play, trees wave, streams flow, the mountain-fir
Nodded above ; behold black Acheron !
Once consecrated to the sepulchre.
Pluto ! if this be hell I look upon,
Close shamed Elysium's gates, my shade shall seek for none.

No city's towers pollute the lovely view ;
Unseen is Yanina, though not remote,
Veil'd by the screen of hills : here men are few,
Scanty the hamlet, rare the lonely cot :
But peering down each precipice, the goat
Browseth ; and, pensive o'er his scattered flock,
The little shepherd in his white capote
Doth lean his boyish form along the rock,
Or in his cave awaits the tempest's short-lived shock.

Yet can it be said that *Childe Harold*, with all its splendour, helps us much towards feeling the more subtle and peculiar characteristics of Greek scenery?

I scarcely think so, if we except the last two of these lines—

> And yet how lovely in thine age of woe,
> Land of lost gods, and godlike men, art thou!
> Thy vales of evergreen, thy hills of snow,
> Proclaim thee Nature's varied favourite now. . . .

There a distinctive trait is seized — the range of visible contrast in Greece, where so small a space divides the climate of the beech and of the palm. But the finer touches are to be found in the Eastern tales written during the three or four years after his return to England—most of all, perhaps, in the *Corsair;* there, indeed, is heard the voice of one who had been 'spell-bound within the clustering Cyclades.' How well these lines describe the sudden fall of evening after the short twilight of a summer day in Attica:—

> But lo! from high Hymettus to the plain
> The queen of night asserts her silent reign.
> No murky vapour, herald of the storm,
> Hides her fair face, nor girds her glowing form;
> With cornice glimmering as the moon-beams play,
> There the white column greets her grateful ray,
> And, bright around with quivering beams beset,
> Her emblem sparkles o'er the minaret;
> The groves of olives, scattered dark and wide,
> Where meek Cephisus pours his scanty tide,

The cypress saddening by the sacred mosque,
The gleaming turret of the gay Kiosk,
And dun and sombre 'mid the holy calm,
Near Theseus' fane yon solitary palm,
All tinged with varied hues arrest the eye—
And dull were his that passed them heedless by,
Again the Ægean, heard no more afar,
Lulls his chafed breast from elemental war;
Again his waves in milder tints unfold
Their long array of sapphire and of gold,
Mixt with the shades of many a distant isle,
That frown—where gentler ocean seems to smile.

His estimate of the people.

But how was Byron impressed by the character, the condition and the prospects of the Greek people? The impression was unfavourable, and the forecast was altogether gloomy. He liked the Albanians on the whole:—

Fierce are Albania's children, yet they lack
Not virtues, were those virtues more mature.
Where is the foe that ever saw their back?
Who can so well the toil of war endure?
Their native fastnesses not more secure
Than they in doubtful time of troublous need:
Their wrath, how deadly! but their friendship sure,
When Gratitude or Valour bids them bleed,
Unshaking, rushing on, where'er their chief may lead.

Praise quite deserved, perhaps, by some Albanians, though too flattering if applied to all the tribes

without distinction. Then, as to the Turks, he decidedly liked the Turkish gentlemen whom he had met. 'There does not exist a more honourable, friendly, and high-spirited character than the true Turkish provincial Aga, or Moslem country gentleman.' It is to them that he pays a compliment, *à propos* of Kara Osman Oglou, in the *Bride of Abydos*:—

> The line of Carasman
> Unchanged, unchangeable hath stood,
> First of the bold timariot[1] bands
> That won, and well can keep, their lands.

The Turks, Byron says, are *not* treacherous, *not* cowardly, they do *not* burn heretics. He denies that they are exceptionally ignorant. 'Is a Turk worse clothed, or lodged, or fed, and taught, than a Spaniard? Are their Pashas worse educated than a grandee? or an Effendi than a Knight of St. Jago? I think not.' As to the Greeks, his opinion at this time is fairly summed up in the well-known lines of *Childe Harold*:—

> Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not
> Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow?

[1] The 'timariots' were the holders of the timars, or fiefs, bestowed by the Sultan as rewards for military service.

By their right arms the conquest must be wrought?
Will Gaul or Muscovite redress you? No!
True, they may lay your proud despoilers low,
But not for you will Freedom's altars flame. . . .

The Turks may be turned out, he adds, by the unbelievers, or by those Moslem fanatics in Arabia who then had just seized Mecca and Medina,—

But ne'er will freedom seek this fated soil,
But slave succeed to slave through years of endless toil.

That was Byron's view in 1810. He tones it down a little in the notes, which were written after he had seen more of the country. Thus in January, 1811, he wrote:—'To talk as the Greeks themselves do, of their rising again to their pristine superiority, is ridiculous; . . . but there seems to be no very great obstacle, except the apathy of the Franks [*i.e.* of Europe] to their becoming a useful dependency, or even a free state, with a proper guarantee,—under correction however, be it spoken, for many and well-informed men doubt the practicability even of this.' In the *Giaour* he calls the Athenians

His forecast in 1811.

'Slaves—nay the bondsmen of a slave,'

alluding to the fact that, under the Turks, Athens belonged to the Kislar aga, or chief of the black

slaves of the Seraglio, who appointed the fiscal agent,—a very good thing for Athens, by the way, though Byron did not see it in this light, since it screened Athens for centuries from the Pashas of Eubœa, to whose government it belonged. In the same poem he says of the Greek merchants,

> Still to the neighbouring ports they waft
> Proverbial wiles and ancient craft;
> In this the subtle Greek is found,
> For this and this alone renown'd.

Again and again he says that the Greeks have no chance of becoming free unless a foreign power steps in to deliver them. He compares them to the Catholics of Ireland, to the Jews throughout the world, (this was in 1811, remember) and such other 'cudgelled and heterodox people.' Note this prophecy, because it was so completely falsified by the results, and because the success of the Greeks without foreign help was precisely what must have drawn Byron's sympathy most strongly to them afterwards—perhaps with a twinge of compunction for the wrong he had done them. In 1811, however, he had made up his mind: the Turks, or the Spaniards—he was not sure which—were the best people he had seen in his travels; the Portuguese were the least estimable;

the Greeks came above these last, but not much. It is interesting to observe Byron's unconsciousness, in 1811, that there was anything stirring below the stagnant surface of Greek servitude. Selim, in the *Bride of Abydos*, speaking of his band of miscellaneous desperadoes, says—

His unconsciousness of coming change.

> The last of Lambro's patriots there
> Anticipated freedom share,—

alluding to Lambro Canzani, who formed a scheme for freeing Greece in 1789, but was left in the lurch by the Russians, and turned pirate. That was Byron's notion of the last thing that had been attempted in this way. But silent forces were even then preparing the revolution which was to break out, and prevail, ten years later. When he reviled the bondsmen who could 'wield the sickle, not the sword,' he little dreamed what a harvest was soon to be reaped in those fields. There is nothing strange in this: the wonder would have been rather if Byron had seen deeper. The springs of the Greek movement were not then in Greece—unless we except Janina—but in Paris, in Russia, and in a few commercial cities of other countries. Byron was a young man of twenty-two, not particularly philhellenic, and with a young man's conviction that he saw through every-

thing. It is more strange that, in 1811, he should have been unaware that the modern Greek language, which he was studying, had then for some ten years at least been going through a process of regeneration. He devotes a note on *Childe Harold* to criticizing an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, and there says (in March, 1811):—'The reviewer mentions a plan . . for the purification of the Romaic; and I have endeavoured in vain to procure any tidings or traces of its existence.'

Here, then, we are at the end of the first chapter in Byron's relations with Greece. He was now twenty-three. Twelve years pass. At the age of thirty-five he returns to Greece, to uphold the Greek cause, and to end his life on Greek soil.

The years 1811-1823.

Only a few words can be given here to his life during that interval of twelve years. It was in 1812 that he awoke and found himself famous on the publication of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*. Between 1813 and 1816 he wrote the *Giaour*, the *Bride of Abydos*, the *Corsair*, *Lara*, the *Siege of Corinth*, and *Parisina*. His marriage to Miss Milbanke took place in January, 1815, and his separation from her in February, 1816. In April, 1816, he left England for ever. During the next seven years his

home was in Italy. He met the Countess Guiccioli at Venice in April, 1819. From January, 1820, till Byron left Italy for Greece, this lady and her father, Count Gamba, lived under the same roof with Byron at Ravenna, Pisa, and Genoa. These three years, 1820-1822, were years of incessant literary work. The twelfth and thirteenth cantos of Don Juan were finished only two months before he left Genoa for Greece. In 1821—the year before Shelley's death—Byron, Shelley, and Leigh Hunt had planned a journal to be published in England, and to be called the *Liberal*. In the summer of 1822, the first number appeared, containing Byron's *Vision of Judgment*. But the *Liberal* was a dead failure; only three more numbers appeared. It was as a red rag flaunted in the face of John Bull, and made Byron more unpopular than ever.

Just then, however, in the spring of 1823, the gallant 1823.
struggle of the Greeks was beginning to awaken some genuine sympathy in England. Byron's old friend Hobhouse wrote to him that a Greek Committee was being formed in London. There was not much chance then of any European power interposing to help Greece. The politicians of Europe were not thinking much of Greece in 1823; their attention was fixed on Spain.

That was another attraction for Byron; a generous cause was always the more fascinating to him if it was unfriended. The failure of the *Liberal*, too, seems to have made him fancy that his popularity as a poet was waning, and to have stirred in him a restless desire to show what he could do in other fields. Once he went so far as to say that he did not believe poetry to be his true vocation. At Genoa, in April, 1823, he finally made up his mind to assist the Greek cause, in his own words, 'not only with his means, but personally,' if the Greeks would accept his services.

April 1823.

To understand what Byron did in the Greek Revolution, we must glance at the general tenor of its course.

Greek Revolution, 1821-22.

The Greek Revolution began in April, 1821. The number of Greeks and of Turks in Europe was then nearly equal—each race numbered not much more than two millions. For the first two years the Greek success was rapid. By June, 1821,—that is in two months,—they were masters of all Greece, from the Gulf of Arta to the Gulf of Zeituni. On January 1, (our January 13) 1822, a Greek National Assembly at Epidaurus put forth a constitution; there was to be a legislative assembly of deputies elected by the

nation, and an executive body of five persons, with Alexander Mavrocordatos as President. Mavrocordatos was, on the whole, the best Greek statesman of his time, and a thoroughly honest man, though not remarkably able, nor sufficiently firm. The epigram of Tacitus has been applied to him:—'while he was only a private man, he seemed something more; and everyone would have given him credit for the ability to govern, if only he had not governed.' At the end of 1822, after many ups and downs, the net result was this:—Greece had established a position as an independent state. People could not say any longer that it was only a parcel of rayahs rebelling against the Porte. It was now a war between the military despotism of the Ottoman Porte and an unaided but united Christian nation, firmly resolved to win religious and political liberty for Greece, or to perish in the attempt. Mavrocordatos.

The years 1823-1824, in which Byron's part falls, were just the years in which the tide of Greek success turned and began to ebb. The causes of this relapse were chiefly the want of a strong government and the want of money. Greece was divided into factions, springing from the conflict of private interests, and Greek action was paralysed. The English loans were 1823-24.

corruptly appropriated or vainly squandered, and only
1825. did harm. Then, in 1825, the Egyptian troops of the Porte, under Ibrahim Pasha, ravaged the Morea.
1827. By the middle of 1827 Greece was exhausted. Then England, France, and Russia united in endeavouring to arrange a settlement between Greece and Turkey. The allied fleet almost annihilated the Turkish fleet in
Navarino. October, 1827, at Navarino—that 'untoward event' as it was called soon afterwards by an English prime minister. In 1828 the French cleared the Morea of
1830. the Ottoman troops. In February, 1830, it was finally arranged that Greece was to be an independent state. The first king of restored Greece, Otho, second son of the king of Bavaria, landed at Nauplia in February, 1833.

The nadir of the Greek cause.

Thus in the whole story of the war there was no moment which presented the character of the Greek struggle in such unfavourable colours as the moment at which Byron came to it. It was the hour of discord, of intrigue, of rampant selfishness, of fatal blindness or indifference to the urgent needs of the common weal. The years 1821 and 1822 had the lustre of success. The years from 1825 to 1827 had the lustre of heroic constancy under terrible suffering. But the space between, in which Byron's part was

played, had neither one nor the other. The events which they comprise are the only blots on the record of a glorious and ultimately triumphant enterprise.

About the middle of July, 1823, Byron sailed from Genoa in the brig Hercules. His party consisted of Count Gamba, Mr. Trelawney, an Italian doctor, a Greek from Russia, and eight servants. They had five horses on board, and two one-pounder guns. Byron took with him 10,000 Spanish dollars in coin, and bills for 40,000 more; also a large supply of medicines. Early in August they anchored in Argostoli, the port of Cephalonia. At Cephalonia Byron stayed from the beginning of August to the end of December. Nothing could have been more prudent. Greece was divided by factions. Byron saw that, if he entered Greece Proper, he would become a bone of contention between them. He resolved to hold himself aloof for a while—sufficiently near to study the state of affairs, without being seized upon and dragged into party squabbles. His object was, as Count Gamba puts it, to know and to become known. He had a great horror of being taken for a hunter of adventures. He was determined to show that he was a practical man with a serious object. He was much annoyed

1823, July. Byron starts for Greece.

Cephalonia.

by a report, which reached England, that he was living in a luxurious villa, and continuing *Don Juan*. As a matter of fact, he was living on cheese, vegetables, and hopes of Greek regeneration,—writing nothing but letters, and sometimes a journal. 'Poetry,' he said to Gamba, 'should only occupy the idle.' He had made up his mind to go through with his task to the end. 'If Greece should fall,' he wrote, 'I will bury myself in the ruins. If she establish her independence, I will take up my residence in some part or other—perhaps in Attica, where I once passed seven months.'

Byron's views.

Byron had two leading ideas about Greece at this time. First, he saw the manifest truth that nothing could be done till the Greeks were at one among themselves.

1823, November.

In November he wrote from Cephalonia a public letter to the Greek Government, in which he said:—'Unless union and order are established, all hopes of a loan will be vain. . . . The great powers of Europe will be persuaded that the Greeks are unable to govern themselves.' At the same time he wrote a private letter to Mavrocordatos. According to Gamba, Byron had at this time a high opinion of Mavrocordatos as a sincere patriot and an able statesman; and, though there may have been occasional

jars afterwards at Mesolonghi, there are indications that Byron retained that general opinion to the end. This letter is excellent. Byron points out to Mavrocordatos that civil war must have one of two results —to make Greece a Turkish province again, or to make it a dependency of Europe. 'If she is desirous of the fate of Wallachia and the Crimea,' he writes, 'she may obtain it to-morrow; if of that of Italy, the day after.' [Byron had sympathized with the unsuccessful Carbonari just before he left Italy.] 'But if she wishes to become truly Greece, free and independent, she must resolve to-day, or she will never again have the opportunity.' Byron's second leading idea was that, order and union once obtained, the next thing to aim at was a loan, which should enable the country to develop its natural resources. 'Every one says,' he writes, 'and I believe, that a loan will be the salvation of Greece.' Accordingly he advised the early departure of the Greek deputies, who had already been commissioned to go to London to negotiate the loan. Meanwhile he lent £4000 towards the cost of the Greek fleet. It was no easy matter to realize that sum in the Ionian islands; but at last the bills were discounted on fair terms by an English house in Zante. At

last the Greek deputies started for London in November.

Now that we have come so near to the point at which Byron removed from Cephalonia to Mesolonghi, let us look a little more closely at the state of things in Greece at this time—in December, 1823.

Course of the War, January—December, 1823.

When that year 1823 opened, both the Turkish and the Greek resources were for the time exhausted. But both sides were resolved to fight to the bitter end. Sultan Mahmud was a man of strong will and of great capacity. Everyone saw that this was a war without truce, a duel between tyranny and freedom, between force and law, between Christianity and Mohammedanism; and it was this that began to draw towards Greece the sympathy of Christian Europe.

At the beginning of 1823 the Sultan suffered a sudden blow: a great fire at Constantinople destroyed an arsenal and cannon foundry, with a large quantity of brass guns, ammunition, and military stores, which had been prepared for the spring campaign. It had been intended to crush the Greeks by an overwhelming onslaught. That idea had now to be given up. The Porte had no money, and the old resource was used—a new issue of base coin. But the Sultan was not a

man to be daunted. As he could not crush the Greeks this year, he resolved to harass them. A Turkish army was sent to establish its headquarters at Patras, and to invade the Morea. The Pashas of Scodra (Scutari) and Janina in Albania were ordered to march Albanian troops through western Greece, and join their forces at Lepanto or at Patras. A small Turkish fleet was to meet the land-forces at Patras. Another Turkish force was to move through Thessaly in eastern Greece. At the end of 1823 the situation was this:—the Greeks held the whole of the Morea, except Patras (the Turkish head-quarters), and two castles on the Messenian coast. The Greeks held also Bœotia, Attica, the Isthmus of Corinth, and the northern shore of the Corinthian Gulf, except Lepanto and the two forts at the entrance. The Turks had been driven from the siege of Anatolico, and the Greek fleet had come to protect Mesolonghi.

December, 1823.

Greece was therefore in a good military position; but it was penniless, and worse, it was torn by party-strife. The Legislative Assembly best represented the national party,—those who were really devoted to the common interests of the country. The small Executive body was the focus of intrigue and faction. Broadly

Parties in Greece.

speaking, there were three interests which were struggling for the management of affairs. First, there were the Albanian ship-owners of Hydra and Spetzas representing the naval interest. Secondly, there were the leaders of the Armatoli in northern Greece and Roumelia, representing the military interest. Thirdly, there were the Greek primates or magistracy of the Morea, whose real aim was to set up a territorial aristocracy. The president, Mavrocordatos, was an honest man, but he had made two grave mistakes; he had assumed command of an army, and had incurred a bad defeat; and he had kept the Greek public far too much in the dark. As he was not factious, the factions united against him; he was deposed from power in the middle of 1823, and retired to Hydra. Thence, in December, he went to Mesolonghi, having been authorized to organize the government of western Greece.

Byron's first aim.

During the whole time that Byron was in Greece the country had no strong or capable executive. Byron's object was to strengthen, as far as he could, the national party—that is, the patriotic majority in the Legislative Assembly. That was the only way to get an independent and able executive body. If the first instalment of the loan had come while Byron

lived, he might possibly have succeeded. As it was, he could do very little. He could only urge good counsels. It was not till eight months after Byron's death that something like a strong executive was formed under George Conduriottes; and that was done only after the party of the Morea had been put down by main force. This was the second case of civil strife in the years 1823-4; the first was actually going on while Byron was in the country—from Nov., 1823, till after his death. A faction in the Morea, under Kolokotrones, who was simply a brigand chief, was openly opposing the central government.

Byron's arrival at Mesolonghi was hailed with an outburst of enthusiasm. He sailed from Cephalonia on December 28, 1823, and, after having been driven out of his course by a Turkish cruiser, landed at Mesolonghi on January 5, 1824. He was saluted with salvos of artillery, firing of musketry, and wild music. Crowds of citizens—men, women, and children—gathered on the beach to welcome him. 'He came ashore in a Spetziot boat,' Gamba says, 'dressed in a red uniform. He was in excellent health, and appeared moved by the scene. I met him as he disembarked, and in a few minutes we entered the house prepared for him—the same in which Colonel

January 1824, Mesolonghi.

Stanhope resided. The Colonel and Prince Mavrocordato, with a long suite of European and Greek officers, received him at the door.'

Colonel Leicester Stanhope, afterwards Lord Harrington, was acting as agent of the Greek Committee in London. He and Byron were not congenial spirits. The Colonel, as Byron said, was for writing the Turks down, while he, the literary man, was for fighting them down. They had many differences, but Byron did justice to his colleague's good intentions and honourable character. During the four months at Mesolonghi—the last of his life—Byron and Stanhope lived in the same house. Byron occupied two rooms above those of the Colonel. One of these was his bed-room, in the other he received visitors; at night this second room was turned into a bed-room for his companions. He continued his ascetic regimen. Resolved to show that he could be as frugal as any soldier, he arranged the expenses of his table on such a scale that it should cost rather less than sixpence a day.[1]

[1] This was the bill of fare, as given by Gamba :—

A pound and a half of bread, - -	15 paras.
Wine, - - - - - - - -	7 ,,
Fish, - - - - - - - -	15 ,,
Olives, - - - - - - - -	3 ,,
	40 paras.

Nothing was accomplished during his stay at Mesolonghi. He had planned a military expedition against Lepanto, but had to give it up, as a band of Suliots whom he had taken into his pay, and who gave him endless trouble, had finally to be cashiered, after a serious affray in the town. These months, from January till his death in April, were passed in active preparation. The morning was passed in business, or in drilling the military corps which they were endeavouring to form—a corps of motley nationality—English, Scottish, Irish, American, German, Swiss, Belgian, Russian, Swedish, Danish, Hungarian, Italian. Byron and Gamba generally rode in the afternoon. The streets of Mesolonghi were in such a filthy state that to avoid them they usually went about half a mile by sea in a canoe, and had their horses to meet them outside the town gates. The rheumatic fever of which Byron died was probably due, at least in part, to his obstinacy in insisting on coming back in the canoe, after a heating gallop under heavy rain. After dinner Byron and

His breakfast was a cup of tea without milk or sugar. Such a system, persevered in for months, must have helped to determine the course of his illness; he had no strength to throw off the fever. Six weeks before his death he had complained of vertigo and nervous derangement. Earlier still, in February, he had had a convulsive fit.

his friends usually amused themselves with single-stick or sword exercise, or pistol-practice at a mark. He retained a taste for mild practical jokes: thus he frightened a visitor who was afraid of earthquakes by rolling about some barrels of cannon-balls in the room over-head.

In the state of Greece just then nothing could be done till the loan came from England. Byron's death took place on April 19, 1824—just before the moment at which his influence might have been of use in directing the application of the funds, and seizing the opportunity to enforce counsels of united action.

April 19, 1824.

But these last days of his life at Mesolonghi have one interest of which nothing can deprive them. There, on the spot, among the Greeks, Byron was forming a definite opinion as to the prospects of Greece. This opinion is revealed in some vivid glimpses. In January, about three weeks after his arrival at Mesolonghi, he said to Gamba—'I am not come here in search of adventures, but to assist in the regeneration of a nation whose very debasement makes it more honourable to become their friend. . . Only let the loan be raised, and in the meantime let us try to form a strong national government, ready to apply the

His own account of his aims.

pecuniary resources, when they arrive, to the best objects—to the organization of troops, the establishment of internal civilization, and the preparations for acting defensively now, and on the offensive next winter.' Byron was anxious to keep the cause of Greek liberty perfectly distinct from the cause of republicanism in Europe. He regarded the Greek war as 'a contest between barbarism and civilization, between Christianity and Islamism—a struggle in behalf of the descendants of those to whom we are indebted for the first principles of science and the most perfect models of literature and of art.' For such a cause he hoped 'that all political parties, in every European state, would unite their efforts.'

His view of the cause.

There are some words which he spoke to Gamba in March, 1824, which come to us now, over these six-and-fifty years, with a strange suggestion of that prescient power which has been said to touch the lips of dying men; they well deserve to be remembered as Byron's prophecy for Greece. The friends had been taking a long ride, and talking over a motto for their Greek newspaper; they chose a good one at last, the verses of the Odyssey,—'Zeus of the far-borne voice robs man of half his worth, when the day of slavery comes on him.'

His prediction (March 1824).

Then Byron said:—'I hope the moment for uniting the Greeks is arrived. The chance of succour and the approach of danger are both in its favour. . . . I cannot calculate,' he went on, 'to what a height Greece may rise. Hitherto it has been a subject for the hymns and elegies of fanatics and enthusiasts; but now it will draw the attention of the politician.

'The different views and jealousies of the European powers are well calculated to favour the efforts of the Greeks, for they apparently will secure their neutrality. This campaign, it seems, will lay the foundations of Greek independence, and then a glorious field for improvement will naturally be opened before us. At present there is but little difference in many respects between Greeks and Turks; nor could there be; but the latter must, in the common course of events, decline in power; and the former must as inevitably become better in every sense of the word. The soil is excellent; with skilful tillage and good seeds, we should soon see how rapidly, and in what perfection, the fruits of civilization would rise around us. In the present state of European politics, there seems to be in the East a sort of vacuum, which it is advisable to supply, in order to counterbalance the

preponderance of the North. The English Government deceived itself at first in thinking it possible to maintain the Turkish Empire in its integrity, but it cannot be done; that unwieldy mass is already putrefied, and must dissolve. If anything like an equilibrium is to be upheld, Greece must be supported. Mr. Canning, I think, understands this, and intends to behave towards Greece as he does with respect to the South American colonies. This is all that is wanted, for in that case Greece may look towards England with the confidence of friendship, especially as she now appears to be no longer infected with the mania of adding to her colonies, and sees that her true interests are inseparably connected with the independence of those nations who have shown themselves worthy of emancipation, and such is the case with Greece.'

Such was the substance of Byron's view a few weeks before his death. He ought to be judged—as more than once during his stay in Greece he begged that he might be judged—by his deeds. His motives for joining the Greek cause were of course mixed. He was conscious of practical ability, and had become seriously ambitious of proving it in the face of the world. His voluntary exile had cut him off from that contact with

public affairs which would have been afforded by his position in England; and the official status which the Greek Government offered him was thus a definite inducement for one whose hopes of a political career now depended on some such recognition by foreigners. Then his interest in the Greek struggle was real and strong. Here, he felt, was an arena in which the cause of liberty was detached from the coil of western politics and the cant of western doctrinaires. Greece drew him by the spell of memories which had become part of himself. The unassisted heroism of the Greeks appealed to his generous instincts all the more powerfully because his expectations had been brilliantly disappointed. With all this there was mixed up, at first, a good deal of mere vanity; but when he had once fairly engaged in the work there was no more nonsense. He threw himself into it with his whole heart and soul. He now exhibited those qualities through which the English character has usually obtained administrative and political success in dealing with races of a weaker moral fibre, though perhaps of a more subtle intelligence. No people can pass through centuries of severe oppression without having its moral stamina weakened—not necessarily as a permanent result,

but at least for a time. The typical English qualities were just those which were most urgently needed in Greece when Byron came to it. No sympathy could have been more genuine, more resolute, or more practical, than that which Byron finally consecrated to the deliverance of Greece. Few of the foreigners who espoused that cause were successful; even among Englishmen, General Gordon and Captain Hastings are exceptions, helping to balance the ill-success—due to very different causes in each case—of Lord Cochrane with the Greek fleet and Sir Richard Church with the Greek army. Byron did direct good by the prudent and able exercise of his influence. Over and above these direct results, however, he rendered to Greece a service greater than could have been performed by a brilliant soldier or statesman. He brought to Greece the most beneficial of allies in the enthusiasm kindled by his own presence. As has been said by a writer whose words rarely glow, 'wherever the English language was known, an electric shock was felt, when it was heard that

> The pilgrim of eternity, whose fame
> Over his living head, like heaven, was bent,
> An early but enduring monument,

had died 'where his young mind first caught ethereal fire.''

Byron came to the Greek War at the darkest and most discouraging hour of its course; he saw the Greek character in its least attractive phase; the thick cloud of trouble and discord was hardly beginning to lift when he passed away. These pages have shown without reserve the worst that Byron had seen and thought of the Greeks, the best that he had seen and thought of their adversaries in the war. Yet, at the end, when he had now been for months in close communication with the Greeks,—seeing them under circumstances the most unfavourable that could have been devised,—he pronounces as we have heard. He expresses a sober confidence in the future of the country. He records a deliberate opinion that the Greek nation is fitted to supply in the Levant that counterpoise to other influences which is desirable for the security of European peace as well as in the particular interests of the British Empire. The estimate formed by Byron is the same which actuated on this question the foreign policy of Canning. Two men, who in their different ways were pre-eminently the two Englishmen of genius contemporary with the crisis of the Greek struggle

agreed in giving a well-considered support to the cause of Greek independence. Both had formed the judgment, based on practical knowledge, that this country and others would consult the general good by upholding the Greek nation; a nation then only just emerging from the shadow of a despotism under which, for three centuries, all the higher energies of national life had been dormant, and yet evincing, almost before the day of freedom was fully risen, the unmistakable promise of fitness to share and capacity to strengthen the liberties of Europe. Byron's name is still cherished by the Greeks. The work which he did for them will be variously appreciated. But we shall render no more than justice to his memory, and to the cause which evoked the last efforts of his life, if we recognize that he was thoroughly in earnest. The epitaph in the church near Newstead bears the simple fact: when Byron died in Greece, he was indeed 'engaged in the glorious attempt to restore that country to her ancient freedom and renown.'

ROBERT MACLEHOSE, PRINTER, GLASGOW.